

BR

1725

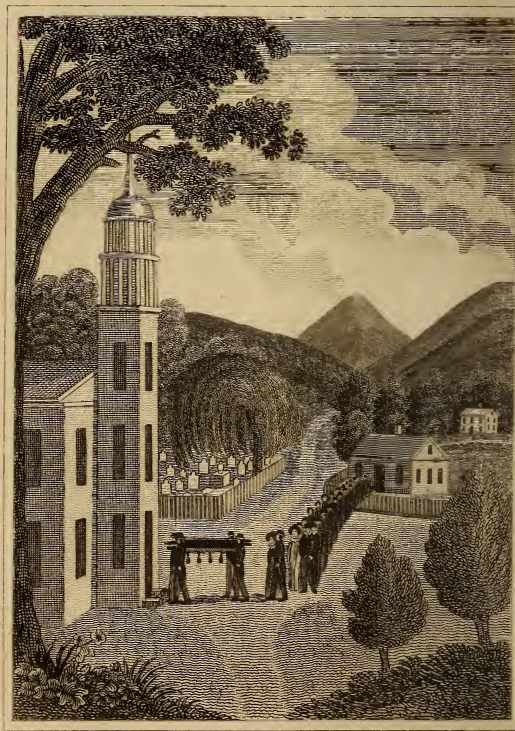
.E35N8



Deposited in Clerk's Office

July 12. 1832.

Vol. 8th p. 314.



See Chap. 1st. & 2^d.

MEMOIRS

OF

(Morgan)

MRS. EMILY EGERTON.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

PREPARED BY

RUFUS NUTTING, A. M.

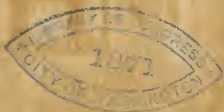
Professor of Languages in Western Reserve College.

"It is not enough that I am gratified; God, my preserver, must be glorified."

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY PERKINS & MARVIN.

1832.



BR 1725
E 35 N 8

Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1832,
By CHRISTOPHER C. DEAN,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

1367

1

1127

117

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

	<i>Page.</i>
Her parentage and childhood,	5

CHAPTER II.

Her residence at Mrs. C.'s till her marriage, . . .	9
-----------------------------------------------------	---

CHAPTER III.

From her marriage till her widowhood,	20
-------------------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

From the death of Mr. Egerton to her recommencing housekeeping,	42
---------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER V.

From her recommencing housekeeping till her death,	101
--------------------------------------------------------------	-----

P

CHAPTER VI.

Brief view of her character, with some additional extracts from her writings,	143
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

MEMOIR, &c.

CHAPTER I.

ON the east side of the Green mountains in Vermont, and about fifteen miles from the principal ridge, is situated a neat little country village, called Randolph. Two branches of White river, meandering southward, unite a little below, leaving between them a considerable elevation of excellent land, which constitutes the township.

The large groves of beech and maple, interspersed with cultivated farms, orchards, and commodious houses throughout the whole thirty-six square miles ; the richness of the soil ; the uncommon verdure of the pastures and lawns ; the clearness and rapidity of rivulets and brooks ; the western prospect of the Green mountains, rising in no less than five distinct grades of elevation, —green “unperceived, so softening into blue,”

—and above all, a moral and enlightened set of inhabitants;—conspire to render this one of the most pleasant summer residences in favored New England.

Among the early settlers of this town, was Justin Morgan, Esq., the father of the subject of this biographical sketch.—EMILY was the second of his five children; and was born February 16, 1784. In her seventh year she was called to one of the most severe afflictions, the loss of a kind and faithful mother. Her death was sudden and affecting. “Come, Emily, my dear,”—said her father one day, on her return from school,—“come quick with your little brother and sisters. Your dear mamma is very sick; perhaps she is going to heaven!” The little group were speedily assembled around the sick bed, where lay the dying mother. She kissed them, and told them again of heaven and hell; of the love of Jesus; of the faithfulness of Him who has promised—“When thy father and thy mother forsake thee, then the Lord will take thee up.” And soon after she ceased speaking, they saw her turn very pale, and then she was laid in the grave, where they saw her no more.

But the dying scene, and dying words, had

made an impression on their tender minds too deep to be effaced. At least, this was the case with little Emily, as she was herself heard to remark not long before her own death. Her affectionate father survived her mother about seven years. But, justly appreciating the importance of something like a mother's care to children so young, and especially to daughters; and finding it, moreover, inconsistent with his employment of instructing, to take that special direction of them that even a father might in different circumstances; he determined to place his children in the families of some of his judicious and pious friends. Thus, as will hereafter appear, with regard to Emily, the confidence of their dying mother in the divine promise had not been misplaced. The Lord indeed "took them up," richly providing for their best interests, temporal and eternal.

Emily was accordingly committed to the care of Mr. and Mrs. C. of Randolph.—"When Esq. Morgan brought his little daughter to me," observed Mrs. C. "he made two especial requests. One was, 'that I should teach Emily neat and industrious habits;' the other, 'that I should keep her from much company while

young, particularly that which is gay and unprofitable.' ”

He was considered an excellent instructor of youth ; and an engaged Christian. The above requests show him to have been also a wise man ; —a man, at least, practically acquainted with the dangers and necessities of youth. How many well-meaning parents find too late that they have permitted their children to squander the only proper time for forming systematic and industrious habits, in juvenile amusements, and unmeaning chat ;—that they have been attempting to teach them experimentally “how to conduct among folks” before they can have judgment enough to distinguish between the “precious and the vile” in society. For fear that they should be led into temptation, when they come to mingle with the world ; they suffer them to mingle with the most irregular part of it before they have sufficient fixedness of principle to resist the very temptations into which they themselves cruelly thrust them.

But the wisdom of these two requests of the father, will be more obvious from the further history of the daughter.

CHAPTER II.

Her residence at Mr. C.'s, &c. until her marriage.

MR. C. resided in a pleasant but retired part of the town; about two miles south of the meeting-house, but in full view of it. The red mansion itself fronts the south, with a continuous back-kitchen and wood-house, extending at right angles with its opposite side, as is a frequent custom of building in New England. Towards the west is a gentle slope, bordered by a thick wood. On the north and east is a thrifty orchard, intersected by a road passing southward within a few rods of the east end of the house, and separated from it by a neat yard fence. Towards the south, a distant prospect opens through an extensive and sometimes abrupt valley, terminated by the Barnard hills. Over these, in a clear sky, is seen the celebrated Ascutney, at the distance of forty miles, standing in the deep vale, and raising his sky-colored head in beautiful grandeur, as if to enjoy a more extensive prospect of the far-rolling

Connecticut. In the apartments of the house there was nothing distinguishing, if we except the systematic neatness which uniformly prevailed. Whether the symmetry, and beauty, and stillness of this situation produced any permanent effect on the mind and habits of young Emily, is perhaps rather probable than certain. But the influence of the inmates is less dubious; whose characters, therefore, deserve here a passing notice.

Lieutenant David C*****, was an early settler in the township; an excellent practical agriculturist; of a sound and discriminating mind; of considerable reading, and much thinking; but of few words. His tall, erect person, serious aspect, and mild but decisive manner, were happily calculated to secure personal esteem and respect; while his uniform uprightness as a citizen, gave him a large share of influence in the town; and his consistency of Christian conduct, rather than a multitude of verbal protestations, proved him to be really, what he had long been professedly, a sincere disciple of the holy and benevolent Saviour.

Mrs. C. possessed also many of the mental and moral traits of her husband. She was one that

“looked well to the ways of her household ;” rather distinguished for the order and propriety of her domestic economy ; for which a discriminating mind, improved by reading and reflection, happily qualified her. To these intellectual characteristics she joined an ardency of affection, and a happy talent at ready and rational conversation, which, habitually under the direction of Christian principle, prepared her for distinguished usefulness, both in the domestic, and in the larger religious circle. In the judgment of charity, she not only *was*, but she *appeared to be*, what she professed. Not only did her deeds of piety and benevolence speak her gratitude for redeeming love ; but her tongue was also ready, on all proper occasions, to bear testimony for the truth ; and to declare what God had done for her soul.

These excellent partners in life were the parents of three children, a daughter and two sons. The youngest found an early grave, while a member of Middlebury College. The other son still inherits the patrimony, and many of the parental characteristics. Their sister, Elizabeth, was distinguished for elegance of person, delicacy, and correctness of taste, and that retiring modesty united with a placid and contemplative

turn, which never fail to render the possessor amiable. But the fairest flowers are not always suffered to bloom the longest. Consumption had marked her for his early victim. She died not far from twenty years old;—not, however, till she had left, to her afflicted friends, scriptural evidence of a hope full of immortality.

Elizabeth C. was younger than Emily Morgan, and perhaps received more influence than she exerted. In companionship, however, the influence is usually mutual and reciprocal. It was undoubtedly so in this case, as the similarity of their dispositions, as will hereafter appear, had laid the foundation for an ardent and lasting attachment—never interrupted but by the all-conquering stroke of death.

In such a family as the one described, it was to be expected that a youth of Emily's docile and amiable temper, as she progressed in years, should progress also in "whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report." That this was the case with her, was evident, both from the testimony of her kind patrons, and that of her whole subsequent life.

Mrs. C. remarked to the writer, after the subject of the remark was beyond the reach of

human censure or applause, "Emily was always pleasant and cheerful in acquiescing in my opinion, even when it involved any course of conduct crossing to her own juvenile inclinations. This was sometimes the case; as she naturally possessed a very social turn, and I felt it important, as well from my own conviction of duty, as from the request of her affectionate father, who was now no more, 'to keep her from much company,' during her years of youthful inexperience. A faithful observance of this injunction, however, was sometimes difficult, on account of Emily's society being much valued, and sought, especially by a company of youth on the opposite street; whose thoughtless habits and amusements I knew would be very dangerous to her. I told her that I would be responsible for her refusing to associate with them, and that she might at any time, excuse herself by referring the matter to my decision. This course," continued she, "was then, on the whole, the most satisfactory to Emily, though it brought a torrent of hatred and aspersion upon me from the disobliged party. But I still thought it best to fear God rather than man; and endeavored firmly to persevere in my determination. After she came of age, however,

I told her I should resign this part of my guardianship ; and she must now take the responsibility of acting and appearing to act, as a free agent in these concerns. And, although she still wished to conceal herself in my shadow from those now unwelcome parties of amusement, I thought it time to teach her the habit of self-control, and to elicit her decision of character.

“ The other injunction of her departed father,” continued Mrs. C., “ I found no difficulty in observing. Emily fell naturally into systematic habits of industry and propriety in the common duties of domestic economy, as well as in her mental pursuits.”

“ Was she ever in the habit of attending at parties of amusement ? ”

“ Never,” replied Mrs. C., “ in the *habit* of doing it. Once, indeed, when she was teaching school in another part of the town, and the temptation was strong ; I think it was a desire to gratify the wishes of her expected partner for life,—she consented to attend a ball. But she was very unhappy while there, and still more so after her return. For she had tasted the happiness of noble employments, with which she knew this to be inconsistent.”

“Were you acquainted, Mrs. C. with the occasion of her fortifying her mind with an effectual barrier to such temptations?”

“I remember the occasion perfectly well,” she replied. “It was no other than the evening party just alluded to. She there felt so very unhappy, and saw so clearly the inconsistency of her conduct in attending such a midnight assembly, that, after her return, she solemnly resolved, in secret, never to attend another; nor ever did she.”

I well recollect having heard the subject of these memoirs mention this circumstance, not many years before her death.

“When my secret resolution,” said she, “became known to Mrs. C. she immediately began to scrutinize my motives for forming it; well knowing that on the correctness and purity of these depended the divine blessing necessary for the strength and permanency of the resolution itself. I was myself,” continued she, “very apprehensive that it would be shaken by the persuasions of one whose friendship I exceedingly dreaded to lose; but could expect nothing else, should I persevere in my present determination. But what was my agreeable surprise to

find that his attachment seemed to be rather increased by the knowledge of what I had done, although he was not a religious person."

She mentioned this latter fact for the sake of exemplifying the case of many a young lady, who perhaps does violence to her own convictions of duty, in attending parties of pleasure to gratify another; and of showing experimentally, how much more honorable and more pleasant it would be, even in the estimation of the other sex, to be *strictly conscientious* in this as well as in every thing else. The better judgment of Miss Morgan's partner, however his present feelings might be disappointed, could not but applaud such an act of heroic decision in one with whom he was expecting to traverse the boisterous sea of life; and so would the better judgment of every other young gentleman, whose judgment is worth prizing, and affections worth possessing. But to return to her excellent home.

Here she lived a life of happy retirement and domestic usefulness, with the exception of some summers spent in instructing, till she had passed the age of twenty. Nor could the affectionate faithfulness of Mr. and Mrs. C. fail, under God, of having a most salutary influence on her men-

tal and moral character ; nor of meeting some proper returns in such a heart as Emily Morgan's. As appears from her letters, as well as her conversation, she respected and loved her benefactors, and gratefully cherished the recollection of their parental kindness ; and carried with her a sense of the good effects of their instructions, and restraints, and admonitions, even to the grave.

The following extract from a letter to Mrs. C. may show, in some measure, the correctness of these statements. It was written during the latter part of her residence with Mrs. C. while employed in instructing.

“ *August 13th, 1803.*

“ *Dear Madam,*—Ever mindful of my obligations to you, though always delinquent in the performance of my duty, I have long sought opportunity to send you a few lines as a mark of filial affection, as well as in compliance with your maternal request. Indulge me in using the terms *filial* and *maternal*, since I am deprived of my natural parents. May I ever find in you, as I ever have done, a friend, a guardian, and a parent. Methinks I hear you say ‘nothing shall

be wanting on my part; if you do not always find me thus, the fault is your 'own.' This I believe; and may I be enabled so to conduct as to deserve the name of a child. I believe your task has been doubly that of a parent; since you have had difficulties to encounter which a parent never would have thought of. But one thing has made your task easy, or at least supported your mind under it, that you have been acting with a higher view than to obtain the applause of mortals. Nor could you suppose that the object of your beneficence could in any measure reward you. Your reward is in heaven.

“ My situation this summer often recalls the scenes of happy childhood. When treading the very footsteps of my departed parents, I cannot but reflect ‘how changed the scene!’ I said *happy childhood*, for I knew not then that any evil could befall me, while under the protection of my parents. I knew not that the seeds of sin were then rooted in my heart, ready to sprout with the least cultivation.

“ My dear madam, may I hope that, with the same judicious eye, you will continue to inspect all my conduct, and reprove my many faults. Believe me, your reproofs will be always welcome, as they are always seasonable.”

As the result of an interesting attachment already alluded to, Miss Morgan was married in March, 1806, having just entered the twenty-third year of her age. But this portion of her history demands a more distinct consideration.

CHAPTER III.

From her marriage till her widowhood.

MR. ASA EGERTON was a son of Colonel Egerton, an early settler of Randolph. He was a young gentleman of pleasing address, vigorous mind, and amiable disposition. His tall person, black hair, and piercing eye, were strikingly contrasted with the small size, delicate complexion, and uncommonly mild aspect of her who was henceforth to be known by the appellation of MRS. EGERTON. But personal dissimilarity often heightens the beauty of mental likeness; and with regard to these exteriors, two can sometimes the better walk together who are not agreed. The weakness of the ivy, renders more necessary the strength of the oak. Indeed, with one exception, Mr. Egerton was all that Emily could desire in a partner through life's pilgrimage. But this exception was not obvious, like the

contrast in their persons; and she, who as yet could scarcely read her own heart on one important subject, could hardly be expected, at such a juncture, to discern this subject clearly in the heart of another. But this must be left for a subsequent part of her history.

Mr. Egerton, had spent some years previous to this connection in the occupation of a housewright; but soon after, obtaining a convenient stand in the centre of the town, he opened a house of public entertainment. Although this situation was far different from the happy retirement of Mrs. Egerton's younger days, yet she was not unhappy in it. The voice of her husband, was the voice of duty and affection; and, in her submissive and devoted mind, was sure to be responded to by that of inclination. Her governing principle, with regard to her partner, seemed to be "all thine are mine," and, "if I make you sorry, who is he that maketh me glad, but the same that is made sorry by me?"

The following extract of a letter written about this time, introduces Mrs. Egerton's religious exercises of mind.

"*Dear Mrs. C.*—I have thought of late, that, if I could see you, I would converse freely and

fully upon subjects which I have before stifled in my mind, when it might have been enlarged in the cause of the Redeemer. I dare not forsake the impressions I now have, lest they should never return again. I have long wished that my thoughts might be turned into a right channel; and have hoped that I should have conviction that would be powerful; and have even dared to pray, that, if prosperity could not draw me, adversity might drive me. Thus I see plainly, that I have been trying to make myself better by attending to some externals. And though I did not dare to neglect them, and even had a secret hope they would have a good effect; yet now I see that I may keep '*resolving and re-resolving and die the same.*' Then I query thus—'*What shall I do?*' The answer will be in another question—'*Do you wish to be any better?*' I dare not say I do; for if I did wish it, I should then give up my heart. I once heard Rev. Mr. E. say, that a sinner who sees his danger, will not remain long in the same place. He will either become reconciled to God, or he will go back by degrees into a worse state; and the worst of it is, he will be insensible of his decline. No, I will not say this is the worst; for is it not as

bad to be sensible of our declining state, without any heart, power, or resolution to be otherwise?—Here, my dear benefactress, you see a picture of my heart; and thus, I fear, it will always be, or worse.

‘O why that sleeper in thy breast?’

I often apply these words, but do not go far enough to find ‘why.’

“I have presumed upon writing what I have, and much more I could write, because I think I ought not to be silent; and though I have friends around me, yet I have none who appear even to have felt the power of religion. If it is convenient for you to write me a line, or make me a visit, I should esteem it a great privilege.”—Again.—“Though I hear these truths by some means almost daily, and constantly every Sabbath, and know them to be as important as my soul itself, yet I sensibly feel a place in my heart which remains untouched; a *cold* place, of which I never am sensible towards any other object. ‘What is the reason?’ I ask, and ask, and yet I know. For this stupid delay will proclaim the truth, clearer than words. I would die the death of the righteous; but, while life lasts, would as gladly hold fast my idols.”

I cannot help remarking here, that a person's religion usually *ends where it begins*. That which begins with something external, or something imaginative, will probably appear, at the last trying hour, to have been only an imaginary thing; or, like every thing else external, will be "shuffled off" with "this mortal coil" at death. Mrs. Egerton's religion, as it is clearly perceived, *began with the heart*; and what its end was, will be seen hereafter. I say "*began*;" for, whatever serious impressions she may have been the subject of before, she was evidently now commencing practically, and in good earnest—digging deep to lay a permanent foundation, even on the rock of ages.

Not many years had elapsed, before Mr. Egerton concluded to turn his attention to mercantile pursuits. He commenced by opening a store in Randolph; but, in the course of two or three years, concluded to remove to Stockbridge, a small town, situated a few miles S. W. of the former place. From S. Mrs. E. writes again to her maternal friend, in July, 1810. After speaking of a religious excitement in the place, which she hoped would be blessed to some, notwithstanding certain abuses, in consequence of which

she mentioned several cases of apparent self-deception, she adds, "For my part, I had rather know for myself whether my desires are, at all times to do the will of God, under a sense of his abhorrence of sin; and whether I hate sin, even the secret sins of my own heart, because it is offensive to him; than to have encouragement upon any slight ground, that I am a Christian. If I ever knew the truth, I pray that I may be ever kept in it; and, if I never did, still I have no hope but in God, and pray that I may be enabled to yield to him implicit obedience."

To her youthful friend, Elizabeth C., alluding to the same excitement, she writes again near the same time—"Still I allow, with you, that much charity ought to be exercised when religious advantages are so small as they are here. I am told, that there has not been stated preaching here for twenty years, previous to this summer. If, dear girl, you ever leave your father's house, and dwell in a place where you must necessarily mingle, in some measure, with all kinds of people; some pretending to religion, while their conduct is very strange; some profaning the name of God; some ridiculing religion of every kind; some talking against one

denomination, and some against another; you will then say it stands us in hand to '*know in whom we have believed.*'"

She writes again near the same time—"One thing I desire of my friends before I die; that, if I give no evidence to the world of a regenerated heart before I draw near the close of life, they will not flatter *me* then with the thoughts of peace in death, nor *themselves*, when I am gone, upon the supposition of my having lived a regular life, (should I be enabled to.) For, if I so wound my Saviour, as to refuse his precious calls till I am brought upon a dying bed, should my agony of mind then be ever so great, I should not even dare to pray for mercy. O pray for me that I may find peace in Christ! For how can I be borne with much longer?"

From Stockbridge, Mr. Egerton removed to Royalton, a flourishing town on White river, ten miles south of Randolph. During their residence here, Mrs. Egerton united publicly with the Congregational church in that place, then under the care of the pious and devoted pastor, the Rev. Martin Tullar. Of his pastoral tenderness and faithfulness she often spoke with no common emotions of gratitude. But he has

gone to his rest. Although Mr. E. was uniformly kind and indulgent to her, and willing to gratify her wishes with regard to the enjoyment of religious privileges and ordinances; yet she had long before this discovered, what has been already hinted, that their hearts and sentiments, so closely united in other things, were not likely to be so on this grand subject. Mr. E. professed to believe in what appeared to her the unscriptural and irrational doctrine of universal salvation. He had, indeed, tried all his powers of argument, which were not small, in addition to all the influence of a most tender husband over a most affectionate wife, to proselyte her to his belief. With the Bible in their hands, the subject had been discussed by them, reading and explaining passage after passage, he in his way, and she in her's, till they had examined the greater part of the sacred volume. This examination, however, even in such unfavorable circumstances, had served only to strengthen her faith in the divine assurance, that "these shall go away into *everlasting* punishment," as well as the "righteous into life eternal," or *everlasting* life.

This furnished another occasion for Mr. E. to notice the mild but heroic decision of character

in the one he loved. Always so gentle and compliant where her duty to himself was involved, his better judgment again could not but admire her the more, however his feelings might revolt at it, that, when her faith and duty to her God were concerned, she was not to be shaken by an arm of flesh. He, therefore, wisely determined to make the fruitless attempt no more.

Mrs. Egerton soon had need of the consolations of her Christian hope, and the kindness of her beloved pastor. During their residence in R. that ghastly disease which had already been the harbinger of death in the Egerton as well as the Morgan family, began to make its dreaded approaches to her beloved husband. His pale visage, quickened pulse, and hectic cough, as the autumn of 1813 advanced, made it too evident, that he must seek his winter's residence in a warmer climate.

He accordingly started for Charleston, S. C. and, that he might at the same time avail himself of the benefit of exercise, and prevent the exposure of fatigue then incident to public conveyances, he chose to attempt the long and dangerous journey in his private vehicle, and unattended. The many anxious days and nights

spent by Mrs. E. during his tedious absence of seven or eight months, can be duly reckoned only by those who have been placed in a similar situation. Her solicitude could only be allayed by her reliance on the power and faithfulness of her covenant God; and the tediousness of the time, beguiled by her increased domestic cares, and by frequent prayer and epistolary correspondence with her *absent self*. The latter, indeed, from the uncertainty incident to so long mail routes—a miserable comforter—often caused more pain than it cured.

Of her numerous letters she wrote him during this separation, I find only two; from one of which I make the following extracts.

“*Royalton, Nov. 12, 1813.*”

“*My dearest friend*,—I received yours from Hartford, Ct. on the ninth day after date. I fear you are not quite so well as when you were in Boston; or else my expectations were raised too high by the word which Mr. A. and Mr. C. brought; which was, that they had not seen you look so well for two years. * * * * *

* * I feel very anxious to know how you rest at night. Are you feverish and restless; or does

the frequency of your pulse arise from your gaining strength? If you are restless at night, had you not better take an emetic occasionally, and have some draughts on your feet? How gladly would I prepare them for you, if this were possible! I hope you will keep up good spirits, and find something diverting and interesting in every place. No doubt you will, if your mind is not too much cumbered with cares. * * * He who has ever supported us, will provide for us still. He is loudly calling on us to trust in him alone. Let us rejoice that we are in his hands; and that if he please to continue his mercies, we may enjoy each other again in this world.—I find myself surrounded with a multitude of cares; but think I shall get along very well. * * * If you receive this, you will direct where to find you next. Reading yours, and writing, seems to be a kind of distant conversation, which affords more satisfaction than anything short of your real presence. My letter is very much huddled; but *you* will receive it kindly from your affectionate

“EMILY EGERTON.

“*Mr. A. Egerton, at Baltimore.*”

In the other, written sometime towards his return, she observes,—“There are two considerations which serve to keep me in a degree patient in this long separation. One is that we are both in the hand of God; who will no doubt order all for the best: the other,—one which you suggested,—a constant recollection that the now future event which we so much desire, will, *on its arrival, bring us nearer the time of our final separation by the stroke of death.*”

I find her feelings on the occasion of his departure expressed in a poetic effusion of much tenderness; ending with the following expression of pious feeling with regard to his recovery.

—“If this dear object be obtained,
To God I'll raise my song;
If not—‘Thy will be done’—I'll cry,
Whose goodness ne'er does wrong.”

The following to Mrs. C. was written sometime after Mr. Egerton's return.

“*Royalton, Feb. 1815.*”

“*My dear Mrs. C.*—The thought of not seeing Elizabeth before she died, still preys upon my feelings; and it gives me heart-felt grief, which I cannot suppress, that I had not, in her languishing state, given her some proof of my

never-ending attachment. The last time I saw her, ill health, and my short visit, left me no opportunity with her. I regretted it afterwards; and it left on my mind a forcible impression, that I should take some opportunity to converse particularly with her. But death, alas! was ready sooner to snatch the prey than I to obey the call of duty. I consider this thus ordered for a lesson of improvement to teach me to be ever ready to *let go the cares of life for a moment*, that I may visit the beds of the sick and the dying, that their dying admonitions may have a tendency to break the enchantments of life, to give me an earnest desire for the things beyond the grave, to bid me view death near, not only when following a friend to the grave, but every moment of my life."

When Mr. Egerton returned from the south, his health appeared to be improved, and continued to be comfortable during the beautifully clear and cool summer months of Vermont. But the fear of exposing himself to its piercing winters, and a dread of passing any more tedious seasons away from all he held dear on earth, determined him to close business in Royalton, and remove

his family to Albany in the State of New York. To this circumstance there is allusion made in the following extract.

“ Mr. Egerton is now in Albany with your son Charles. When they return, I can inform you whether we remove soon. What will await us after our removal from this place, I cannot tell. This gives me no anxiety. But I fear the habits of the people will be unfavorable to religion; and that I shall be drawn away with the multitude. I trust, my dear friend,” (Mrs. C.) “ your prayers for us will be answered for our good.”

The arrangement was finally effected; and the removal took place in the spring of 1815.

In Albany he recommenced trade in partnership with Mr. A——, a wholesale merchant of Boston, Mass. But the exertions requisite in closing his concerns at Royalton, removing his family to a distance, and recommencing mercantile business on a larger scale than before, were not well calculated to restore his health; which had indeed, been gradually declining since his return from the south. Add to this, that he now began to experience some reverses in trade.

During the summer, the house of his partner in Boston suffering a failure, he was involved in very severe trials; especially as, from the nature of the partnership; his dwelling and household furniture were involved, as well as his merchandize. From these unfavorable circumstances, the progress of the disease was undoubtedly hastened; and had, by mid-summer, rendered him nearly unfit for business, and even for that care of his beloved family, which was then peculiarly needed. But I shall let Mrs. Egerton speak for herself on this subject.

To Mrs. C. of Randolph.

“Albany, N. Y. Sept. 10th, 1815.

*“My dear Mrs. C.—*Knowing your extreme weakness of body and increasing cares since the death of your daughter, I consider it difficult for you to write. I hope, therefore, you will accept without apology a few lines from your afflicted friend, called to mourning in a land of strangers, with many other trials of various kinds. The first of August I was myself taken sick of a fever. Mr. E. was then from home. He returned on the sixth or seventh, very low; not indeed so weak as before his journey, but his feet and legs

swollen, and very troublesome. He continued to bloat throughout his system. We thought it necessary, therefore, that he should make one more effort for relief. As he placed more confidence in Dr. G. of Woodstock, than in any other physician, he concluded to set out immediately for Vermont. He left me with great reluctance; but I even urged it, considering my own situation not to be compared to his. On the eighteenth of August, our youngest child, little Justin, was seized with a violent fever, succeeded by a cough, and great distress at the lungs; which ended his days on the twenty-fifth. Conceive for yourself, my dear madam, how his tender groans pierced my heart, while I was unable to do anything for him during his sickness, hardly to raise his head from the pillow. He appeared to know me to the very last, would look at me with inexpressible anxiety, when he could no longer speak. My husband gone—my anxiety for him was as great, perhaps greater. One dear little child's remains were followed solitary to the grave, on the twenty-seventh, by none but strangers, excepting my children that survive, and a young man that lives with us. Thus has the Lord seen fit to deal with us;

yet are his stripes much lighter than our guilt. We deserve this correction ; and may we receive it as such at his hand. O my dear friend, may we not entertain a hope for the soul of our departed child ? Not from the persuasion that infancy is pure, but from the compassion of our dying Saviour. Knowing his almighty power to save, may we not hope that he sanctified him ere he caused his early exit ? His will is done ; I would rejoice in this consideration, knowing that he will rightly dispose of every creature ; and that ‘ justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne for ever.’ I therefore study submission through a conviction of his wisdom and justice. Nor would I, although nature pleads for the life of my partner, ‘ prescribe bounds to the Almighty ’ by repining at his will. O pray for us, my dear friends, that, if mercies cannot draw, affections may drive us to the feet of Jesus ; and that each may be enabled to say hereafter,

‘ Trials make the promise sweet ;
Trials give new life to prayer ;
Trials lay me at his feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there.’

“ Yours affectionately,

“ EMILY EGERTON.”

But the same covenant God who had heard her prayer to be delivered from the fascinations of a city life, and had begun to lead her out of them in a way that she knew not, would not leave his severely merciful work unfinished. He too, whose earthly existence had caused her so much solicitude, and his future happiness infinitely more; 'the desire of her eyes,' the partner of her soul; he too must lay his remains beside those of his little Justin, ere she could leave a place full of anxious fears, and probable dangers to her immortal interests.

Concerning his death, I find few particulars in writing. Her feelings as a partner would naturally and justly lead her to draw the mantle of charity over those expiring words and views, which her Christian benevolence would otherwise wish to record for the benefit of those who might be inclined to live in the belief of sentiments which can never effectually take away the sting of death. The most that escaped her lips was, that whenever her anxiety for his eternal welfare compelled her to commence conversation on the subject, he would put her off by saying that "this was a matter only between him and his God." He died a month after the date of the preceding, on the 11th of October.

To Mrs. C. she writes thus on the occasion.—“I have been sorely stricken once and again. Yet hath He not wise ends to answer in all this? Himself hath done it; and ‘shall I receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall I not receive evil?’ I would walk softly before him all the days of my life; praying him to point out and remove all those secret sins which have drawn out his judgments against me.”

To another friend in Randolph.

“*My dear Mrs. N*———,—Oh my beloved husband! how did I watch his every look and action, with the most exquisite anxiety, fearing yet hoping, dreading yet pleading with God to spare. O help me to bless God that he spared so long.

‘This soul of mine the dreadful wound has borne!
Off from its side the dearest half is torn,
The rest lies bleeding and but lives to mourn.’

“I would lie prostrate at the feet of Jesus; and, with an eye of faith, behold him doing all that for me and in me, both for soul and body, which I need. I pray that I may not crave that which he withholds.”

To the sister of her late husband in Randolph.
—“ You are sensible, my dear Mrs. Smith, that I have lost a friend whose sole aim was to render me happy by every act of tenderness, attention, and love. He did not think me perfect; was entirely sensible of my many foibles. But his reproofs were to me sure tokens of his faithful attachment, and good judgment of female decorum. Now, to whom can I look for worldly support—for a leader—for advice in temporal concerns? No one has more reason to be thankful than I, for the many attentions shown me by my friends. But who can I expect will make any sacrifice for my sake? Father and mother—I have none. A home I have not. Who will act the part of a parent to my children, and guide their steps in the right paths? God only knows; and *he does know*; for his ways are from everlasting, and not a sparrow can fall to the ground without his notice. I do believe ‘the Lord will provide.’ And how do I chide my faithless heart, that because he has not made known to me *how*, I am careful and troubled about these things. O how I pray for confidence in God, that I may cast all my cares upon him. I know he will do all that is needful

for me. And O may I be willing to be just *where* and *how* he shall see fit to place me. May I be so entirely humbled by these chastisements, as never to find my vain heart seeking after worldly good or applause. I know I am verily unworthy of the many mercies I have hitherto enjoyed ; have been ungrateful, feeling as though they were my own, not considering they were but lent for a time. Oh, if I might be brought near to God by these trying events, so that my very soul might repose in him from day to day, then I might rejoice forever more. But instead of trusting to his grace, I fear I am exercising the sorrow of the world which worketh death. *

* * *

E. EGERTON."

But he who has said, "As thy *day* is, so thy *strength* shall be," was too faithful to leave his handmaid in circumstances so truly trying, without that Christian consolation which had already enabled her thus to be "shedding tears *through smiles*;" and would enable her at length to obtain the complete victory which she desired, over "the sorrow of the world" which "worketh death." If the furnace of affliction is too hot for the feeble frames of his children, one like

the Son of God will not fail to be seen walking with them in the midst of the fire. He will provide a Peter for every praying Cornelius; a messenger, an interpreter for each disconsolate soul; and will be gracious, and say "deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom."

Accordingly, soon after this severe trial, Mrs. Egerton received a pastoral visit from the Rev. Dr. N. then of Albany, of whose Christian kindness she ever cherished the most grateful recollection. Meekly following the footsteps of his divine Master into the abodes of distress, and learning that her's had recently become such, he could not pass by "on the other side;" but with the look of sympathy, and voice of consolation, he repeated to the mourners this strikingly appropriate passage—" *Leave thy fatherless children, and let thy widows trust in me.*" This was enough. Almost an entire stranger to Dr. N. she could not help receiving it as a message sent from God. Nor could she despair of obtaining all things needful from Him who can afford such seasonable relief.

CHAPTER IV.

From the death of Mr. E. to her recommencing housekeeping.

IN the situation in which she was now placed by a stroke seemingly so severe, her Christian character was left unshackled, to evolve itself more rapidly, and to the extent which her subsequent history will show.

On the news of her various afflictions reaching Randolph, her late husband's brother, Capt. E., immediately set off for Albany. Through his seasonable assistance, a small portion of the remaining property was rescued from that commercial vortex, which would otherwise have doubtless engulfed the whole. She did not, however, tarry at Albany long enough to be made acquainted with the exact degree of his success; but as soon as consistent after the mournful scene was past, she set off with her three surviving children, to return again like

Naomi of old, to her own country. As the carriage rolled heavily over the Green mountains, containing all that remained of her once prosperous family, the widow's thoughts were many, but her words few: "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty." Yet was she not unhappy. *The Lord had done it*, and that was enough. "In the multitude of her thoughts within her, his comforts could delight her soul;" and in this respect, though sorrowful, she was still rejoicing.

Soon after reaching Randolph, she writes thus to her sister-in-law, Mrs. Smith—

"When brother L. first returned from Albany, I was made to see that I had been marking out paths for myself. I had been flattering myself there would be some way provided for me to keep two of my children with me. But oh the inexpressible weight which then came upon me! My dear children must be thrown upon the world. Instead of rendering *them* my poor services, I must render what little service I can to others, for my own support. O my dear sister, how did bereavements, crosses, and losses, all unite to burst my heart asunder! But I feel

condemned for indulging such feelings, because I know it savors of a want of confidence in God. It had previously been my daily prayer that God would by some providence, make me to understand what He would have me to do. Now what shall I say? Hath not the Lord placed me here? And until my duty is made plain in some other way, I hope I shall be thankful that I may here remain. * * *

“Your affectionate sister,

“EMILY EGERTON.”

Thus Mrs. E. generally spent the time with her numerous and devoted friends in Randolph and the neighboring towns, for near eleven years. Her three surviving children were put under the care of honest and industrious inhabitants of the place, in whom, however, the chief requisite was, in her estimation, “*the fear of God.*” She had learnt from her own experience, the value of the principles and habits they would be likely to acquire under such tutelage.

The following extract, of near the same date with the preceding, introduces another individual, for whom she had also exercised much parental care; and who had long been an inmate of her once prosperous family.

To Miss E. T.

“ *Emily—dear Emily,*—My thoughts are much upon you. My anxiety for you is not in any measure decreased. Still I am not in a situation to afford you any assistance, and I know not that I ever shall be. I suppose you are still with Mrs. Francis; and beg of you to strive to please her, and be strictly faithful in all her concerns. I anxiously hope that you may have a home there, and not be cast upon the wide world entirely unprotected. You must not expect that every thing can be just as you would wish it. Remember that those who are placed in very eligible situations, do not arrive at this. If you feel at any time an uneasiness or irritability of mind, guard against imprudence in speaking. Reflect for a moment what your situation would be, if deprived of a home and the protection of those who seek your good, rather than your hurt—an inexperienced female who cannot weigh her conduct in a just balance, nor know the consequence of every misstep, nor always distinguish accurately between right and wrong,—her faults ever observed, exposed, and exaggerated,—who is exposed to temptations of every kind, without strength to withstand them,

or wisdom to shun them. Guard strictly your tongue, it is an unruly member ; so apt to go without permission or consideration ; so swift to exaggerate ; nothing short of the grace of God, causing a lively sense of our accountability, can properly restrain it.

O Emily ! could you know how my heart is burdened, not only by being torn from almost every thing that is dear on earth, but for the future welfare and improvement of my own children, you would not willingly add another weight to it."

About this time she began to keep a private journal and place-book. In these she noted occasionally her religious exercises of mind ; the subjects of the public religious discourses she heard ; copies of some of her familiar letters ; pieces of original and of selected poetry, &c. From these manuscripts I shall occasionally insert extracts, illustrative of the state of her mind and heart at different times ; from a full conviction that a knowledge of such private exercises are of much use in forming an estimate of character. Whatever and however one may speak in other circumstances, in the pres-

ence of none but his Maker he usually *tries at least to speak the truth*. These extracts, however, must be very brief, or they would swell this little memoir to volumes.

One year from the deaths of her beloved partner and child, I find the two following entries.

“*August 25th.*—I would notice this day the anniversary of the death of my dear little Justin. O the ties that bound him to my heart ! I feel that they originated in some degree, from what the Lord wrought in him, in giving him that placid, obedient, humble and patient spirit—which I am not forbidden to hope was the effect of grace. O Lord God, thou hast done right, and my greatest happiness is that thou *dost* and always *wilt* know what is best for thy creatures ; and I do greatly rejoice that I may make a full surrender of myself, and my children, and all things wherein I am concerned, into thine hands. And I do know that perfect love and confidence in thee doth cast out all fear. Dear Redeemer, I pray that thou wilt be merciful to my surviving children. Wilt thou cause that they may be provided for in a way that may be for thy glory, and their everlasting good. *I*

need not know *how*; only this I know, that thou wilt accomplish whatever thou seest fit. Were it not for this confidence in thy wise management of all events, I should often cry, 'Wo is me! who will plead my cause?' But now I have no concern on account of *anything but sin*. Thou art my help. Thou wilt be my deliverer, O my God.

" Oct. 11th, 1816.—I wish to remember this day in a way that may reflect honor upon the government of God in his dealings with me; it being just a year since the death of my husband. Lord God, help me to practice the many lessons which this event is calculated to teach me. I pray that a lesson of *humility* may be inwrought into my soul. Suffer me never for a moment to lose sight of my entire dependence upon thee. Help me always to expect, and be willing to bear trials; and to be patient under them. Suffer me never to wish to aggravate the faults of others, but enable me to look to myself, and know from what motives I act, and find out my secret faults. 'What I know not, teach thou me;' and keep me from falling into those sins which I think I abhor.

" Oct. 28th.—My desires this morning to

become *spiritually minded* are beyond what I can express. O Lord God, if I am sincere in them; if I am truly tired of my vain thoughts, sick of the allurements of a false imagination—help me to aspire more and more sincerely and ardently after holiness of life, and purity of heart. Make me capable of judging of myself, and of bringing my conduct to be tried by thy word, and not by the opinion of the world. May there not be one secret root of self-applause dwelling in my heart; but may I have the graces of thy Spirit rooted there, so that I may live by them, and they in me; and *be my main-spring of action, that I live not in vain.*

“*Dec. 9th.*—I would this day record the faithfulness of God in finding a place for my little daughter. Many days of painful anxiety have I waited, not knowing where to go but to God, who always hears the cries of his creatures. I pray for faith ever to call aright on the name of the Lord, and for confidence to plead his promises in all difficulties.

“*May 3d, 1818.*—May I be so humbled as never to have one exalted thought of myself, or even strive in any way to gain attention from creatures, or court their applause, or have my

thoughts exclusively occupied with the attention of even my best friends. It is my dearest friends that ensnare my soul ; because I suffer my thoughts to be more upon them than upon God. Forbid it, gracious God ! and pardon my ingratitude. The friends I prize so highly, I have reason to think are thy friends ; yet, O Lord, that is no excuse for me. *If I loved them for thy sake alone, my care and thought for them would never interfere with my duty to thee, nor would ever intrude into my devotional exercises.*

“ *Aug. 10th.*—Have had the most longing desires of late to be delivered from a *self-complacent spirit, and from all desires of applause from man* ; so as not to have a thought in my heart, when performing this thing or that, whether noticed by any creature or not.” * * *

Indeed, were a judgment to be formed either from her journal or her daily appearance, she had habitually, as well as at that time, “ a most longing desire ” of *Christian humility and self-abasement*, and a most rooted aversion to *display*, to acting, or seeming to act, from a desire of the notice or applause of her fellow creatures.

" *March 1st, 1819.*—Have resolved this day, as God shall give me opportunity, to attend to secret prayer *early* in the evening. As I have attended to this duty generally just before retiring to rest, it is frequently performed late, and I very tired and dull. It seems, therefore, as if by hurrying it over, I neglect God, and give the world my best thoughts and feelings." It will be recollected, that during these years, her time was not always at her own disposal, residing as she did with different friends.

" *March 26th.*—Received this evening a letter from a very dear friend. In consideration of my feelings on the occasion, I have reason to fear, that I love creatures more than my Creator. Although the name of Jesus was the theme on which my friend dwelt, instead of finding my thoughts fly to Christ, and my soul enraptured with love to him, I have detected myself watching for some flattering expressions which would fire my soul with an assurance that I am idolized by a creature. I had assurance enough before of her affectionate regard; and the letter itself is an attestation of the continuance of it. Oh, she has shown my convicted heart that God must be supreme. My dear injured Saviour!

I pray that thou wilt not turn from me in anger, but wilt still look upon me with an eye of tender compassion, and wash away my guilt. O deliver me from myself. Help me to act for eternity and thee !

“*July 9th.*—When I reflect back upon my stupidity and cowardice while I lived with my indulgent husband, it seems like a punishment intended for me, that he was taken away without giving evidence of a change of heart. When my thoughts now are upon a future world, and the state of the dead, I am constrained to say—‘O my God, how justly hast thou left me to mourn, as those that have no well grounded hope!’ Yet my Redeemer liveth.”

Extract of a letter written near this time to Miss Parthenia Maria B., afterwards Mrs. Talcott, of Connecticut.

“I can but hope my dear P., that you are now placed where you can be made useful. I doubt not that you send a thought now and then, and perhaps a *tear*, after your friends ; for you have an affectionate heart. But then you will say, ‘although my mind must sometimes turn

at the calls of nature, yet will I follow where God shall call.' When do you think of returning? I begin to anticipate your trial in parting with your father, sister, and brother, if they pursue their intended mission among the Indians. I have been sometimes almost ready to wonder, why there are placed in our hearts so many tender strings that must be so often torn. Yet, herein do we see the wisdom of God and the weakness of creatures. For the moment our affections are supremely placed upon our Creator, these ties of life will cease to rend our hearts; or, at least, the wound will be more than healed by the balm of divine consolation. O Parthenia, you know I have had trials in life bitter and severe, and I bless God for them; for I have felt in my heart, what I would not exchange for all the world and all its treasures. Now I can contemplate the perfections of God with pleasure, and, I hope, with increasing desires after holiness. I hope my proud spirit is in some measure humbled, and that I am resolved to forsake my former sins—the sins of my heart which God has mercifully shown me by his correcting hand."

To another friend in affliction.

“ Why He sees fit to curtail your usefulness in life, and appoint unto you so much pain and bodily infirmity, we do not know; but we may know hereafter, and now *believe* it is all in mercy. Joys and sorrows are wisely intermingled through this life; for unless we pass this howling wilderness, we should never make haste towards the Canaan of rest. You ask, my dear friend, what I think of your situation. I believe God is able to restore you to health again, if he sees fit. But O, dear S., is it not the desire of your heart that his name may be glorified, whatever ‘seemeth him good’ to do with you? I know it requires abundant grace to feel so in reality. O the depth of our depraved nature! How it lures us on to make Christ our *last* refuge. Should we see as many days on earth as did good old Jacob, we should need the grace of God to sustain us through the whole of them; and should probably say at last, ‘Few and evil have our days been!’ I long to have you say, ‘God is my portion. I will not lean upon an arm of flesh, but will stay myself upon the mighty God.’ O may you, by the loss

of outward comforts, richly enjoy the blessing, even life for evermore."

In the winter of 1821-2 there was an interesting revival of religion in Randolph; which was closely connected with the religious history of Mrs. E. Such a season she had never before witnessed, though she had long been praying for it, and was one of the first to welcome its approach. But, as is frequently the case with those inexperienced in revivals, it came at last to her "suddenly;" it assumed a different appearance, and affected her own mind, at its commencement, far otherwise, than she had anticipated; for it was "like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap;" and she found that, instead of beginning at once to sing hallelujah for what the Lord was doing for others, she must first be prepared to "thank God" (to use the language of another) "that she was out of hell herself." In order to this, her Christian hope must be shaken to its very foundation. Soon, however, did she come forth like gold purified in the fire. Those internal graces which had before been almost smothered by concealment, were now displayed in their proper character; and instead

of a life of constant misgiving from attempting to conceal the light she had received; she was thenceforward enabled to let it shine before others by a manifestation of more humble boldness and external activity in the cause of Christ. In this way, she soon experienced the truth of a remark concerning another distinguished female disciple; "that she was habitually so busily employed in doing good to the souls of others, that Satan could rarely find an opportunity to suggest desponding thoughts concerning herself."

As illustrative of her state of mind just before the commencement of the revival, the following extract may be exhibited. It is from almost the last letter she ever wrote to her kind benefactress, and is dated at Roxbury, where she was then instructing.

"*Dear Mrs. C.*—When away from Randolph, those I regard as my friends, are often brought to remembrance. Gratitude to my great Benefactor will not suffer me to regard with indifference those whom He has made instrumental in smoothing my journey through life. No one would know by my appearance that I have much

sense of mercies or of duty. It is God who searches the heart. I have, for some time past, dwelt very much upon the mediation of Christ, and his atoning righteousness. Is it right that a sense of guilt should drive any one from the Saviour? It cannot a soul that knows he has nowhere else to go. I heard Mr. B. observe last spring, that there are doubtless some real Christians, who have low and inconsistent views of the Saviour. I had thought so of myself before, and that my coming so far short of the Christian spirit evinced that I was not one. I set myself to examine the foundation of my hope—whether Christ was formed in me the hope of glory. The more I examined, the more it appeared to me I was trusting to a legal righteousness, and had been all my life striving to be a Christian in my own strength, having never given up myself to God. My mind seemed dark with regard to pleading the merits of Christ. I even doubted whether his blood had ever been applied to my guilty soul. It was, and still is *inward* sin which is my burden; feeling so much impurity within, having my thoughts filled with myself, or not seeking the glory of God. O my dear Mrs. C. I cannot write with-

out tears what a sense I had of the vileness of my motives towards God. In things the most sacred, I feel the most guilt. O it has seemed to me that the religious privileges I have always enjoyed ; I have lived only to abuse them. Thus my mind labored for a long time. At length I thought—‘ Is there no way for me to find Christ, and *receive him as my only Saviour?* ’ I felt this to be of such vast importance, that here my whole hope of salvation must live or die forever. I believe the Lord has heard my anxious desires to have my mind enlightened with regard to pleading his merits for acceptance with them. I humbly trust He has shown me of late, in some small degree, how to get out of myself; at least, my desire, is to be found in Christ. I have not lost a sense of my sins, although it seems wonderful that God has not given me over to my own heart’s lusts—‘ to be filled with my own devices.’ The more I see of myself, the more precious Christ seems. *Salvation is by Christ alone*; and though I should never be adopted into the number of his chosen ones, yet I can give in my testimony that there is salvation in no other. I feel resolved, through Christ enabling me, when burdened with sin, not to run

away from God, because I cannot keep myself from it ; but to fly to the Saviour, and if I perish, to perish bearing testimony for Jesus.

“ With the most sincere affection and respect, I am, dear madam, your unworthy

“ EMILY EGERTON.”

Fast day, April, 1821.—After blaming herself for staying from meeting on account of a storm, she proceeds thus. “ When, from trifling inconvenience, I lose a precious privilege, the thought often occurs—shall I miss the great salvation also, through want of persevering love to the Saviour, to push me forward in duty ? Must I mourn, as I do this day, over lost opportunities in the regions of despair—where there can be no more intercession—where repentance cannot procure pardon—where prayer cannot be answered—where hope can never enter to repel the tormenting thought that endless blessings are lost through delay, through giving over of right purposes, through yielding to carnal ease or indifference ? Oh God my Saviour ! help me, do all for me—else I am undone.”

Some time after the commencement of the revival, she writes thus in her journal.

“ *Feb. 2d, 1822.*—I desire to bless God that He has permitted me to live to see the out-pouring of his Spirit in Randolph. I pray that many souls may indeed be born of God, and that they may give to God the glory due to his name, that their every desire may be that God may be glorified and themselves abased. Oh this propensity in man to rob God of his glory, and arrogate praise to himself! Dear Saviour, I feel—I know its destructive tendency is no less than separating the soul forever from the Being who made it—to whom we owe our all, and who will spurn with righteous indignation every attempt at duty which is not performed with a disposition of true love to Him. I desire to thank thee for *any* manifestations of thyself to my poor earth-born soul. If ever I mount above these grovelling attainments—these half-way resolves—it must be by the finger of thy touch, great Immanuel! No other remedy, no other physician can ever reach the depth of my pollution, and cause my thanksgivings to ascend on high.

“ *April 14th.*—Have this day heard two excellent sermons by Rev. Mr. M., of Middlebury, who, hearing of the work of the Lord in this

place, has come to render assistance in this glorious cause. May he be rewarded for his labor of love! O it is a searching time! I feel my hope searched to the very bottom. This morning, under the power of strong temptation, I felt in my breast an awful passion of envy and ill-will—tried to pray and get sight of my Redeemer. But all seemed darkness. I appeared to be ‘sold under sin.’ With these feelings I went to the house of worship. Mr. M. was reading the seventh of Romans. Knew I felt it all, unless I was deceived in saying that ‘with the mind I serve the law of God.’ He proceeded to speak from a part of the seventh verse—‘Nay I had not known sin, but by the law.’ Believe I have long felt myself slain by the law; and it is by comparing myself with its spirituality that I know myself to be a wretched, undone sinner. O for a heart to give glory to God that He has not left me to perish without an atonement. Wilt thou teach me to pray so that thou wilt hear, for fervent, adoring love to the Saviour, for faith and zeal, and for a heart carefully to acknowledge all the evidence he gives me of pardoned sin; and that I may not grieve the Spirit by murmuring because I have

not that full view of the Saviour I could wish. *
* * * *

“*April 19th, 1822.*—Have this day been overtaken in a fault which I heartily detest. It is this—feeling enmity towards a friend, because I believe she has that degree of faith—of reliance on the promises of God, which I cannot realize. O Lord, wilt thou forgive me; and make me to love those that love thee—to feel my heart united to them in the closest bonds of friendship. * * *

“*24th.*—Have this day been guilty of the sin of ingratitude in being discomposed in mind without cause. O Lord I do repent of this my fault. I do desire to resolve in thy strength, to forsake this sin. O help thou me! O my heavenly Father, I do desire to be conformed to thy divine image. Thou knowest that my perverseness is my greatest burden, and the greatest trouble I have on earth. It leads me to cry out daily, ‘*O wretched creature that I am!*’ Do not leave me to despair that thy grace is sufficient for me.

“*28th.*—I am ashamed to complain of anything which I do not feel disposed to put forth strong exertions to be freed from. O help thou

me, dear Saviour, and graciously cause that I may have the love of God continually constraining me to every good word and work.

“30th.—Careful and troubled about many things,
While doubting and tears thy unfaithfulness brings ;
Think, Christian—Ah *Christian*—can this be thy name ?
Is Jesus thy portion ? O blush for thy shame.

Is Jesus thy portion ? Then what can go ill ?
What ‘aching void’ is there which he cannot fill ?
My soul—O thou groveller ! canst not thou arise ?
Has love never fired thee to run for the prize ?

“*May 1st.*—The subject of God’s unchangeableness and our mutability I have felt this day very forcibly. I am sensible that all my darkness and doubts spring in a great degree, from my own changeableness of feeling. By losing sight of the mercies of God, we lose the disposition to praise Him ; we begin to feel the want of love to him, and then lose sight of Christ. Then our sins begin to stare us in the face, and with our present state of feeling, we can find no remedy. When we get over this, we see that God has not changed, nor anything but ourselves.

“*May 7th.*—I desire to record the goodness of God to me this day in being better to me than my fears. O prepare me, great God, for

the responsible situation I expect shortly to fill by thy permission." [Doubtless alluding to that of an instructress in the west part of R.]

"*May 18th, 1822.*—The first Sabbath after commencing school on the W. Branch, heard Elder Huntington preach on 'sowing to the flesh,' or acting for ourselves; and 'sowing to the Spirit,' or acting for God. As far as I know myself, I do pray, that I may in all things act for God. O grant me this desire of my heart, and help me to lose sight of myself, through a clear view of thy great glory. O my Saviour, graciously help me in this that I so much need."

* * * * *

From some hints in the above extracts, it may be inferred that Mrs. E. had concluded to resume the occasional employment of her youthful days, that of instructing the rising generation. She had viewed, on the one hand, her freedom from the concerns of domestic life; and, on the other, the importance and necessity of correct instruction of children and youth; and the view had been attended with the firm conviction that here lay her path of duty towards the greatest usefulness. But not conceiving herself, in all

respects, properly qualified for the employment, she once more placed herself under the care of an experienced teacher ; and recommenced the study of some of the higher branches of English education. Nor was she to be diverted from her purpose by the opinion of others ; or any of the discouragements peculiar to her situation and time of life, till her object was fully attained.—Will not those of her fair sisterhood, who are sensible of their deficiency in anything which would conduce to their greater usefulness, “ go and do likewise ? ”

After sufficient preparation, Mrs. E. commenced instructing again at the time and place noticed in the last date ; and such was her love to the employment, and the satisfaction of her employers, that she continued in the same school during five or six successive years, with the exception of the winter months. Nor was she contented with instructing her pupils in human science. In addition to occasional religious instruction during the week, she assembled them statedly on the Sabbath, and taught them carefully the only book which was able to “ make them wise unto salvation.” In these pious exertions she was joined by some kindred spirits

in the neighborhood, and thus was a regular Sabbath school established, the good effects of which will be more fully disclosed by the light of eternity. Indeed such was her delight in this employment that she was rarely disengaged from a class while residing in the vicinity of a Sabbath school till forced away from it by her last sickness. And it is hardly to be doubted that some of those tender lambs, whom she had endeavored to lead to the Good Shepherd, were among the first to welcome her to the abodes of everlasting glory.

But the prescribed limits of this sketch require us to hasten over this period, to the time when we shall find Mrs. E. again employed in her own domestic circle. I cannot consent, however, to deprive the reader of all that occupied her mind and pen during the intervening time. I shall therefore close this part with a few extracts from her journal and letters during the three or four years preceding that event.

From a letter to her daughter, written in 1822.

“Martha, do you love the Saviour? Prove that you do by loving your benefactors. I cannot let one day more pass, without telling you

that you must be more energetic in improving your time. If you manifest a disposition for this, Mrs. N. will instruct you how to arrange your time profitably, both for labor and study. Be in earnest in both. It is your duty to labor perseveringly when that is required of you. At the same time feel engaged in some mental acquisition, that your mind may not be inactive. I offer these few hints because I was sensible after I left you, that I had neglected to impress these things upon your mind; and because I feel afraid of your forming indolent habits. May God direct you. Will Mrs. N. accept my humble thanks for all her kindness. I will pray for her prosperity."

In her journal about this time is found the following resolution.

"Resolved in my own mind always to strive to make every one happy that I have anything to do with, from a sense of what I owe to God. I pray for strength from on high; that my love to God, and love to souls, may be so strong as to enable me always to seek the happiness of others, without any regard to myself."

From her journal in 1822.

“I feel resolved to rise early on Sabbath mornings, that I may not sleep away such precious seasons. I also resolve, if God give me an honest heart, to act alone for eternity. But I feel that I fall infinitely short of this. I have a dreadful struggle with my proud, vain heart. I fear that this proneness of mine to self-approbation will at last thrust me from the presence of God. I stand self-condemned continually. Yet do not I hate this propensity? Thou God of truth, I pray thee to show me my true character, and make me a partaker of Christ’s righteousness.”——“I am resolved to cherish such a love for retirement, and special converse with God, as to desire to leave all human society for these seasons of delight.”

——“I feel resolved, by the help of my heavenly Father and Protector, should I meet with ever so much scorn, neglect, or contempt from the world, or even from my professed friends, which, by the providence of God, I am not an entire stranger to, that I will keep my mind continually stayed upon God; and that I will not, by the frowns or flatteries of this delusive world, be diverted from this one purpose of keeping close

to God, and expecting from him every thing which I need."

Perhaps few persons have been more prudent in their remarks concerning others than Mrs. E. And yet her humility led her to speak of herself as follows.—"I find in myself a hateful propensity to speak of things which had better be let alone—which cannot profit myself or any one else. Am resolved to set a watch over my tongue, and pray that I may never speak from passion or vain glory, and never to the injury of any one. O that I may know that I have a spark of benevolence in my heart, by feeling a desire to hide the faults of my fellow creatures from a censuring world.

"*June 11th, 1822.*—I desire to record the goodness of God this morning, that he has given me light in my understanding—that my views are more clear on the atonement, and that I feel more sensible love to Christ. It must be strong love to overcome in me this habit of doubting. I pray that a consciousness of pardoning mercy may often renew 'sensations of penitence,' as well as a sense of guilt: and that I may feel some moments of holy joy, though ever bedewed with tears of humiliation.

*“ July 8th.—*My heavenly Father, after giving thee thanks, I hasten to record thy great goodness, thy unbounded mercy, for the consolation thou hast given me in this late interview with two of my children. O thou knowest how unworthy I am of so great a blessing. I pray that I may always feel it; and give thee, without any secret reserve, all the glory; and rejoice in thy goodness, confidently believing that thou wilt carry on thy own begun work, and that thy name will thus be glorified. Do, dear Saviour, cause that they may be spiritually minded, and that they may not fall into error. O carry these tender lambs—these helpless orphans, in thy bosom; and, O do not leave nor forsake my other child. It seems to me that thou wilt not.

*“ August 16th.—** * * Dear Saviour, has the Father committed them into thine hands? If so, thou wilt keep them. May it not be for thy glory to carry these tender lambs in thine arms through this evil world, and ever prevent them from dishonoring thy cause? May every event of their lives be so ordered by thee as to work in them self-abasement, meekness of soul, serious reflection, and a hatred to all sin. May

they be quick to discern in themselves all the workings of sin, and always to distinguish sin from holiness. Thou knowest, dear Saviour, that all my hope concerning them is in the power of thy grace. O that I may always penitently wash thy feet with my tears, and wipe them with the hairs of my head. Will the Lord hear my petition for my other child. Thou wilt not spurn me from thy presence because my wants are many and great.

“*Sept. 1st.*—O my God, what wonders hast thou wrought! Thou knowest that my heart overflows with gratitude. I thank thee that thou hast let me live to witness what I have this day. Two of my children, with twenty others, have with their own hands subscribed to be the Lord’s—to walk in all thy commandments and ordinances blameless. O God of mercy, thou knowest how insufficient they are of themselves for these things. But O may thy grace abound in them; and they always abound in every good word and work. O for thy dear Son’s sake wilt thou keep them as in the hollow of thy hand. O may they always feel what they are, and what thou hast redeemed them from; and may their song ever be ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.’

“O thou searcher of hearts! thou knowest my trembling anxiety for my children, notwithstanding the everlasting truth that, if thy grace is implanted in their hearts, thou wilt cause it to spring up and bear fruit which shall be to the glory of thy grace; and wilt also cause them to endure unto the end. Thou knowest ‘how many false and fruitless blossoms adorn the smiling spring,’ how many seeds spring up, but perish because they have no depth of earth. ‘The force of temptation has not yet been endured—the world has not half exhausted its quiver of poisoned arrows; Satan has not yet tried all his arts and machinations; the race is not yet run.’ O that they may, then, both take hold of Christ’s strength, and never let go the hem of his garment. Help me to plead thy promises with a believing heart; and for my other child also, that his soul may be saved.”

To her eldest son, dated Sept. 11, 1822.

“A——,—Your importunity with me last Sabbath to try to relieve your mind, has led me, I humbly trust, to carry your case to the throne of grace, and there leave it. It is very natural for a child, when in trouble, to go to a parent

for relief. I am thankful, however, my dear child, that your present wants are *such that I cannot satisfy them*. I am thankful that our blessed Saviour has said ‘come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ I am thankful also that our kind and merciful God has made you feel that you need a rest for your soul. Do you think it would give me joy to see you left in a self-complacent spirit, saying ‘All these have I kept—what lack I yet?’ No; I had much rather see you smiting on your breast, in the sincerity of your soul, and crying ‘God be merciful to me a *sinner*.’ Who has shown you that you are a sinner? who told the woman of Samaria all things that ever she did? She had just asked for that living water which the Saviour had been telling her about; and probably thought it would be a very happy thing never to thirst again. But ah! she did not know that this living water could not be given while a *thirst for sin* remained. She did not know, that, before she could take one draught, she must stand alone, ashamed, and confounded under a sense of guilt for her past life. Do you think that, after this disclosure, she felt any more worthy to receive this precious gift? Mark

this one thing—she did not once suspect that she was *now* receiving this living water, by being made to know that ‘this is the Christ.’ And how did she know this? Because he ‘told me all things that ever I did.’ And why did he not, after this, leave her to practice sin again, instead of going into the city to proclaim a Saviour? Because he meant to be glorified in giving her this blessed draught of spiritual instruction—(John iv. 23, 24.) so that now, that she had seen herself, and seen her Saviour, she could leave her water-pot, leave all her self-dependences, all her distressing fears for the past, and march with cheerful feet to proclaim glad tidings, to enliven society, to seek out new duties, new pleasures, and forget *herself*.—She had enough to do to remember her Saviour.

“Albert, I do not write thus to you because *I* have done so; but I do mean now to leave all and run. Perhaps if I had marched boldly and cheerfully forward, you would have followed me without these clogs. I suppose if you had felt as you now do before making a profession of religion, you would not feel so much alarmed. We will bring some other person to view for a moment. Suppose Constantine B. Would God

be more angry with him for standing in his courts, and attempting to make a surrender of himself to Him who he hoped had changed his heart, than for attempting to pray, or even to eat his daily food without right motives? Must he not keep close to his word and ordinances, with a steadfast eye towards Him who has died to fulfil all righteousness; hoping and believing that this dear Saviour, who has bid him plead his merits, will throw his mantle of love over him, and keep him from living to himself, or from apostatizing from the way of truth. Though he should always feel condemned before God, yet ought he ever to be willing to open afresh *those dear bleeding* wounds by indifference, by ingratitude, or by wishing to be saved in any other way than that pointed out in the divine word? Should he try to bring peace of conscience by disobeying or perverting the Scriptures, his case might be thought desperate indeed.

“O my child, may you be instructed effectually by him who teacheth as ‘never man’ taught. I do not think it the best way, when reading the exercises of those who have made great attainments in grace, to measure ourselves by them, and then, because we have not attained

the same, to give all over, and cease to be thankful for what we have received. So did not St. Paul. It is better, when such feelings come on, to go directly to hunting for something to be thankful for.—Did Christ wait for every attainment in grace, before he pronounced the sinner's forgiveness; He waited for repentance; faith, and love. He waited for the woman who was a sinner, to come behind him, and wash his feet with her tears, and wipe them with the hairs of her head. He waited for the woman of Canaan to worship him, after she had cried for help; and then, instead of letting her feel that there was any *merit in the cry of a dog*, he waited until she was willing to accept the crumbs that fell from her master's table; knowing there was eternal life in every crumb received by faith; and then he granted her request. We had better try to forget ourselves. Probably Daniel was praying for the 'peace of Jerusalem,' towards which his face was directed through his open windows, at the very instant his own life was in such imminent danger. Be that as it may, he found something to be thankful for; and that same God to whom he prayed, and made supplication, delivered him from the paws of the

lions, as well as his companions out of the raging furnace. O, A——, I pray that the adversary's mouth may be shut against you, and the fires of temptation have no power to burn, and your song ever be 'Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednago, who hath sent his angel and delivered his servant that trusted in him.'

"Your affectionate mother,

"E. EGERTON."

"*Oct. 5, 1822.*—O Lord, wilt thou help me to record, with a thankful heart, the transactions of last Sabbath—a day of communion—a memorable day to me, when thou didst graciously permit me to approach thy table with two of my children. Their hearts are in thine hand; I pray thee to fashion them according to thy will; and O may they, by thy grace, be found at last at thy right hand. Wilt thou in mercy dispel the darkness that spreads such a dreadful gloom over the mind of my son. O may this be for thy glory and his soul's good."

To her eldest son, dated Nov. 1822. An extract.

———"What, then, will you do? Must you go

mourning all your days under a sense of guilt, and a dread of the presence of God? O that I could find words to express the worth of redeeming love. Angels know it not. No creature knows it, but he that knows himself and still thirsts after righteousness. Redeeming love! I want you to press the subject home, and not rest in a general belief, that, as Christ has died for sinners, you may sometime or other hope to be saved. Be eager to embrace a Saviour *now*. How long must Christ stand with open arms, and we be still halting, and fearing that he has not died for us? O, my child, this subject draws tears from my eyes, because I feel it. But, my dear son, could I shed fountains of tears over you, it would not wash away your transgressions, nor atone for one sin. But one drop of Christ's atoning blood, applied by faith, can purge your guilty soul from all its impurities. Cannot you, for once, lift your eyes to that blessed sacrifice? Do you ever lose sight of yourself, and rejoice that there will be some saved, whether you are or not? A——, have you ever prayed for me? You do not know what a sinner I am, and never will, unless you see my sins all set against me at the judgment day. Pray for me. Pray for your

sister and brother. Pray for the family where you live. Pray for the church of God—for new converts, for old professors. Pray for the heathen. To see how those poor creatures learn the way, and how cheerfully they walk in it under all their discouragements, will make you ashamed ever to complain, even of your inward trials. Since you have so faithful an Advocate, so compassionate a Father and Guide, O fly to his arms, and there closely abide.—*Do you know you have got to fight every inch of ground heavenward with the resolution of a conqueror, with the perseverance of a martyr? And yet you can gain no ground without the dependence of a child, the obedience of an angel, and the faith of an Abraham. Nor can you gain all this at once; yet the prize lies before you. Will you sink into despondency? Or will you arise, lay hold on Christ's strength, and win at last?"*

I cannot but pause for a moment, to view, with my readers, the attitude of this widowed mother at that interesting crisis in the history of her children. You behold her trembling with solicitude on their account—travailing again in birth for their immortal life; at one moment

wrestling with God in prayer for them ; the next, turning to them with eyes of pity and words of faithfulness ; the next, stealing time from her arduous employment to write them long letters of instruction and exhortation,—how appropriate to the case in hand, the letters themselves will show. And they will show another thing, especially some parts of the last, how truly eloquent is the unstudied language of a mother's heart, when sanctified and elevated by the religion of Christ.

“ *The first Sabbath in Jan. 1823.*—O my Father in heaven, I thank thee that my life has been spared to witness the glory of thy grace, which has been manifested in this town the year past. O, I *thank thee*—yet this seems too low an expression of what I have felt of the power of thy grace in my own soul. O Lord, help me to adore thee, help me to praise thee with unfeigned lips. Help me to make the language of the hymn which was read this afternoon all my own. May the disclosures of the secrets of my heart in the light of eternity show that I have this day been truly singing—

‘Thou brightest, sweetest, fairest one
Whom eyes have seen or angels known.’

Can I be deceived, and feel what I have felt of thine excellences, of thy glory and goodness, O Lord?—feel such delight in thine ordinances, in thy worship, in the society of those who are, in the eye of charity, followers of the Lamb? I may be deceived, but thou canst not be deceived. O may thy grace be sufficient for me. Wilt thou perfect what thou hast begun in me. O my God, hast thou indeed ransomed the souls of my children, who have this day had the privilege of participating with me the ordinance of the Lord's supper? Wilt thou, then, O Lord, grant me this one request, which I hope is dictated by the spirit of thy grace—KEEP THEM UNTO THE END. O blessed Saviour, wilt thou remember that my heavenly Father has given me one child more, whom I desire to give back to thee. O do accept of him also, as the purchase of thy blood."

Such secrets of retirement as the following, could they be more frequently brought to light, might perhaps serve to convince some pastors, who have a good degree of confidence in the promises of God, that they might also safely exercise more confidence in the sympathy and prayers of their church.

“ *Third Sabbath in Jan. 1823.*—I do believe the prayers of God’s people have been heard for our minister. He has been wonderfully assisted this day; may his labors be blessed abundantly. Do, Lord, make us to be what he has told us this day we ought to be. His text was in Mark, xiv. 70.—‘*Surely thou art one of them, for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto.*’ A Christian’s deportment will distinguish him from the world in general. He will breathe the language of humility, of prayer, of devotedness to God. He will delight in religious ordinances; his heart will be with God’s people; he will be so abstracted from the world, as not to hold such intercourse with it as would endanger the growth of grace in his heart. His conduct will ‘*speak*’ of repentance, of sobriety, of temperance, of good will towards mankind, of perseverance in every Christian grace and duty even unto the end of life; and then will his ‘*speech*’ prove him to have been one of them, not to the persecuting Jews, but to approving angels, and an assembled universe; nor will it be found to differ essentially from the language of Canaan, which he will thenceforth speak in its purity forever.”

To her two children, residing at Mr. N.'s.

“*July 3, 1823.*

“*My dear children,*—Before I proceed, I wish to acknowledge the favor that I can address you *both together* ; not only as residing together, but as I hope, having similar exercises of mind with regard to the one great point—the salvation of your souls. The mercies of God to us are not small. Could you feel this truth as I do, the most powerful address I could make to your feelings would be, to ‘beseech you by the mercies of God.’

“I have lately felt rather an uncommon solicitude for you. Job said, ‘*It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.*’ My late impressions have been like this—‘It may be that my children have sinned in *blessing themselves* in their heart—in beginning to feel a degree of self-satisfaction and security, which will lead, by imperceptible advances, to those departures of heart from the purity of gospel precepts ; and which, while they excite no alarm, will be sure to draw down the judgments of heaven.’ We must not forget that *God does not slumber when we do.* What he has once taught us is

ever fresh in his recollection. He is ever mindful of his own honor—will ever vindicate his own character. If, while here, we suffer our eyes to be closed to the light he has given us, or our affections to grow cold to the love he has revealed in his Son; the light of eternity will bring these things in full review before us. We shall see in that awful hour, that God has not been unmindful of his own truth, justice, and holiness. Whoever does not praise him with cheerful hallelujahs, will then see that the '*wrath* of man shall praise him.' There is a wide difference between confidence in God, and a presumptuous security. I should rejoice to have your language always be '*The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*' Mark this—'**FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE.**' Do not lose sight of it for a moment, that all good comes from God, and let all your wishes centre in him. Act for God, and feel that you are his. It seems to me that, as far as these feelings and purposes predominate in the heart, they will destroy that self-preference,

and carnality of soul, which must prevent the love of God from *dwelling in one richly*, and cause him to *abound in every good word and work*. I call no action good which is not performed out of pure love to God, and unmixed desires to do his will, with a oneness of heart and soul. O my sins in this respect '*are ever before me.*' My constant prayer is 'Lord, show me my transgressions and my sins.' What an effectual cure for self-exaltation is the sight of these! Mr. M. has just called, as he was passing by, to ask my advice concerning A. Says he is unwilling to study the Bible, or to attend on the Sabbath. I am thankful he is still not out of the hands of a God of power and mercy. He has not had such instruction as you have had. Have you a heart to pray for your brother? May your faithfulness testify for you. I wish you to make the remainder of this week a season of self-examination. I pray God to assist you.

"I am more confined here than I was last summer, because of the necessity of being in the school-house Sabbath mornings. Have much better success than I had expected, in attempting a Sabbath school.

"A., I want to get some tracts. Can you dispose of any you have? If so, please send them to Your affectionate mother,

"E. EGERTON."

"*March 6th, 1825.*—Had news, the week past, of sister Converse's death, who left this town last September for Ohio, where her remains now lie. Thus silently move on the wheels of time. Although disregarded by us, *eternal realities hang on its wing*. O, my sister, how cheerfully didst thou bid me farewell! How little did I realize that to be thy last look upon me, and thy own native land! I try now to follow thee in my imagination to thy long, long home. O my sister, how solemn the thought! thy race is run! What an insignificant spot does this earth seem to thee now. Oh, has heaven broke upon thy ravished sight? Hast thou seen God thy Redeemer? Has he smiled upon thee, and bid thee welcome to his Father's throne? Has he thrown his mantle over thee—blotted out thy sins, and tuned thy voice to never-ceasing anthems of praise? How then can I mourn for thee my sister? How can I, but for

this, *I* am still in a land of mourning and of awful uncertainties. I never could look into thine heart, and *know* that it was transformed into the Saviour's image. My imagination will reverse the scene, and say it *may* be God has *not* smiled upon thee. I indulge not this thought for *thy* sake now, my sister, I have no right to pry into thy destinies, but for my own sake, that the dread thought of banishment from God may lead me to overcome the world with all its earth-born propensities; and, feeling where my help lies, to throw myself at the feet of sovereign mercy, imploring grace from that never-failing fountain to enable me to make a right improvement of this event, and all others which have a tendency to wean my affections from earth. I desire to 'glorify God with my body and spirit which are his.' O may our voices, through the merits of our crucified Redeemer, re-unite in that eternal song of praise to the Lamb.

"*Aug. 10th.*—Have had a most astonishing proof of my unfaithfulness to God this day. Notwithstanding I am so fully convinced of the duty of social prayer in my school, and have constantly practised it night and morning, to

my shame, confusion, and guilt of conscience I record it, that this afternoon I have sinfully shrunk from this duty, on account of the presence of worms of the dust. What makes the sin appear more awfully alarming is, that one male member of the church was present, concerning whom I have felt distressed; and for whom I have prayed. O, how could I have thought that, instead of setting him an example of faithfulness which he so much needs, I should turn coward and traitor to my Lord? O, my God, what can I do? How can I bear to think and know that I have no more strength of principle—no more strength of affection?—I hardly dare hope for forgiveness, for fear my repentance is not genuine. I have no excuse to offer, neither dare to resolve in future. ‘Behold I was shapen in iniquity.’ I will fall prostrate before thee, O God; and beseech thee to ‘hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities,’ &c.

‘Shouldst thou but turn a frowning face,
Where could my guilty spirit fly?
Great God, the balm of thy rich grace
Applied, must save me—else I die.’”

Let the youthful reader, and especially the instructress of youth, attentively consider the above extract. If a single omission of praying with her scholars, during the whole course of this excellent woman's instructing, occasioned her such pungent reflections and bitter repentings, what will, sooner or later, be the feelings of those whose omissions of this most important duty are as numerous, perhaps, as the days of their instructing ?

“*Sept. 14th.*—An afflictive providence has again taught me the solemn lesson, that every thing here is fading; and every beating pulse is hastening the closing scene of my earthly career. —A blooming little girl who has attended my school four successive summers, has sickened and died by my side; yes, while boarding in the family with her, I have been called to see her fond father and afflicted mother bid a last, long—long farewell. O may it teach me this salutary lesson, to perform the duties of each day in the fear of God; expecting to be called, perhaps the next, to give account of my stewardship. I feel that my life is forfeited, and that every day is a reprieve through the mere mercy of

Jehovah. One of the hymns sung at the funeral was the beautiful one of Mrs. Steele, commencing with—

‘So fades the lovely blooming flower,’ &c.

and ending with the following—

‘Then gentle patience smiles on pain,
And dying hope revives again;
She wipes the tear from sorrow’s eye,
While faith points upward to the sky.
The promise guides her ardent flight,
And joys unknown to sense invite
Those blissful regions to explore,
Where pleasure blooms to fade no more.’”

In the following extracts, as in many others, the reader cannot fail of noticing some of the actings of her pious mind. To view her heavenly Father as also the Father of lights, from whom cometh down *every* good gift, had long since become in her a second nature; nor less so to view her fellow creatures, and especially her children, with a look that seemed to say “*I long to have you good and happy.*”

“*Dec. 7th.*—Was ever a poor helpless worm called to so much gratitude and thanksgiving. Lord, I desire to praise thee, and to record thy merciful interposition in placing my dear child A., for a season, in this dear family, with such

beloved friends ; and that I am also permitted to reside with them. O Lord, my anxiety for him has been all known to thee. I thank thee that thou hast heard me. ' I know that thou hearest me always.' But what are my poor thanks? *Lord, glorify thyself.* O permit me to ask, humbly and confidently, one thing more of thee—a favor which thou only canst bestow ; that this season may be a time of thy love towards this child, in bringing him to repentance, and to embrace the truth as it is in Jesus. As far as I know myself, I can appeal to thee for the sincerity of my desires, that thy name may be glorified by this event, and by all the mercies which thou exercisest towards me and mine.

“ *Jan. 21st, 1826.*—How many mercies have I neglected to note down, since this year commenced.—Have to-day been permitted to visit my son Albert's school. There appeared to be improvement and prosperity ; but I know not whether there is at present any special tenderness of conscience, either in teacher or scholars. Will the Lord grant that there may be in both great searchings of heart, and that their eternal interests may not be kept out of sight. O may thy young servant feel the worth of souls ; and

that he is now acting for eternity. Will the Lord make him useful in this employment, and faithful to his own soul.—Have had the privilege of attending a prayer meeting this evening, at which the idea was advanced that ‘religion will cost its possessor something; but the want of it, infinitely more.’ O that I may understand the way of life, and what my daily course amounts to. What sacrifice do I make for God? Is there any *life* in my soul; or am I *prating away* my time, my privileges, my instructions, my profession, like the parrot, without any soundness of heart, or any motive above my own gratification.”

Mrs. Egerton appears to have been experimentally acquainted with a practice of the pious king of Israel, as alluded to in the titles of some of his psalms—“a psalm to CALL TO REMEMBRANCE;” and to have observed particular seasons of reviewing the history of her own life, in connection with the divine dealings with her. Experience had doubtless taught them both, as well as thousands of others now in heaven, that taking a concentrated view of God’s mercies

towards them, had a direct tendency to soften the hard heart, and make the willing feet—

“In sweet obedience move.”

The following seems to have been written on such an occasion.

“*Feb. 16th, 1826.*—Forty-two years has the Lord spared me upon earth. I may well put the question ‘What have I been doing all this while?’ Truly it has been a life of unprofitableness, of ‘vanity, and vexation of spirit.’ Upon taking a retrospective view of my past life, I can say that ‘goodness and mercy have followed me all my days.’ In early childhood, the Lord saw fit to deprive me of earthly parents. But how soon did he raise up those who acted the part of parents towards me. During my youth, the Lord mercifully interposed and delivered me from the snares and temptations into which I might have fallen, and caused me to have such instruction as was necessary to guard my wayward feet. At length he granted me a kind companion, and a home where I had every thing convenient for me. But, alas! I look back on these stages of my life with a kind of horror, for the many sins then committed, for my estrangedness of

heart from God, and proneness to seek MYSELF in every thing. A thirst for human praise, and a desire to have things turn to my own advantage, I think, have been the mainsprings of actions through my sinful course. Even after I professed to love the Lord; and thought I took great delight in divine things, what a sink of iniquity was my heart! How unfeeling towards others, how tyrannical, how proud, how vain! O Lord, have I not mourned over my many defects, and wept in secret places for them? May they not appear in judgment against me at the great day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest. To show me myself, thou, Lord, didst take from me my earthly comforts. Ten years have I wandered a widow, and my children fatherless. Thy judgments, O Lord, are right, and have been wonderfully interspersed with mercies. Although I have been called from place to place, yet never have I been left to say 'I have not where to lay my head.' The Lord has raised up friends who have been near and dear to me. I have not deserved this favor, nor have been worthy of their friendship. He has wonderfully interposed

for my children, beyond what I could have dared to ask—food and raiment, friends and patrons, instruction and faculties capable of improvement. I am not without hope also, that they receive, with some degree of attention, instruction in things divine. Can I ever forget the mercies of the winter past, or cease to be grateful? Will the Lord hear my prayers for A. and for each of them. I lean upon his merciful arm. All my hope for my children centres in him alone. I desire to begin this year of my life with a self-denying spirit; and pray that I may be enabled to exercise self-control, and an humble trust in God and entire acquiescence in his will, and to make a right use of every event which transpires.

“*April 12th.*—The Lord has brought me into a situation to prove the sincerity of the above desire, and to try the strength of my faith, and call into exercise every Christian grace. God’s blessed word! and his restraining grace! what could I do without them? O that I might keep my eye upon the mark, and bury every selfish groveling passion beneath the rubbish of earth-born cares, and trust in God most confidently, and perseveringly pursue the path of duty.”

The trial hinted at above, was the distressing and dangerous sickness of a near friend, on whom she felt it her duty to attend; denying herself the enjoyment of her own children's society, in a family to which she was much attached. (See the extract of Dec. 7.) A sense of duty in administering to the necessities of the sick and afflicted sometimes led her to go beyond her strength. Still the greatest trial of all was, that it should be at all "a cross to her" to endure such hardships and privations.

"June 3d.—Feeling that all mercies flow immediately from the hand of God, I would now especially notice this, of restoring sister A. to such a measure of health, that I have been enabled to leave her and commence my school. O what can I do for the Lord, who is ever mindful of me in every situation that he sees fit to place me in? How much better has he been to me than my fears! I asked for grace to enable me to bear the trial with Christian constancy and a heavenly aim, if not permitted to come hither. Now I ask that the same grace may enable me to act the part of a faithful child towards God. It is not enough that I am gratified. God, my preserver, must be glorified.

“*July 9th.—Sabbath.*—This day’s exercises were made more interesting by L. E.’s being drawn into the meeting-house in his wheeled chair, that he might have opportunity to commune with the people of God. After the exercises, he made a solemn and affecting address to the congregation. While hearing him speak, the breathings of my soul were ‘What hath God wrought!’ It seemed almost like one sent from the dead. My prayer to God was, that he would work *by* his servant as well as *in* him, in making him an instrument of bringing salvation to this people.”

The gentleman alluded to, had become hopefully pious at the commencement of a confinement of several years, by a distressing disease, from which he had never expected to recover. During his address he had remarked, that ‘he then occupied the very spot in the broad-aisle, which a year before he was expecting his coffin would occupy.’ The difference was, that he was brought in and placed there a living man instead of a corpse. A voice from the dead truly.

“*July 30th.*—* * * How dreadful the thought of being a mock-worshipper all my days ; and going from thy blessed sanctuary here to the realms of wretched despair. Sometimes it gives a momentary relief to reflect that no one ever attained to perfect holiness here. But this will not suffice. I feel that there is in me a dreadful deep-sealed earthliness of motive, and desire, and the workings of mind towards *self*, while engaged in the worship of God, which others have been enabled to overcome, and which I believe must be overcome, to maintain a walk with God.

“*Oct. 10th.*—This day closed my school in the western part of the town, where I have been thus employed five successive summers. The thought that this is probably the last season I shall ever spend here—parting with many dear friends, and especially these dear children, who seem so precious, for whom I have often prayed, and have tried to lead their tender minds to God, added to the anxiety I feel for their future welfare, excite many tender emotions, while I attempt to commit them all into the hands of my merciful God and Redeemer.”

I shall close this part of the sketch with a brief extract from a letter to her eldest son, written sometime in the summer of 1826.

“A——, I must make one proposal to which I expect you will be loth to accede. I would not willingly do anything that I knew would be injurious to you, or hinder your progress in study. If I should procure a house next fall, I feel as though I could not do without your assistance, until I could get things in readiness for house-keeping. What I wish to suggest is this—whether it would not be as well for you not to enter college till next spring. You could be there but a short time, before the season would arrive for teaching school; and that would be the very time I should most need your assistance. If Esq. N—— should say anything to you on the subject, I beg you not to forget for a moment how amiable it is in a youth to give all deference to age and judgment, founded on experience. * * * He knows that I am but a woman of limited capacity with regard to the transactions of business. How could I do without such a friend? or how can you? And neither he, nor any other man of good sense and tender

feelings, would continue long to be such an one, unless he should see implicit confidence exercised by the one he befriends. You cannot see this subject as I do, until you are brought to feel the *need* of a friend, *when in bitterness of soul*. This time I have seen; and God forbid that a selfish heart should ever render me ungrateful. * * * I have never thought you wanting in attention, or lacking in affection for me. Have taken great courage from this fact, to hope that a blessing from heaven would be bestowed on you.

I am glad to see you set upon getting a thorough education; but am inclined to think, that a person of good capacities may do more for himself by way of preparation, than he could anticipate before making the experiment.

“Have no room to add more.

“YOUR MOTHER.”

Allusion is here made to an event in Mrs. Egerton's life, which will be more fully narrated in the next division.

CHAPTER V.

From her recommencing house-keeping till her death.

ST. PAUL somewhere speaks of "her who is a widow indeed." It is not, perhaps, easy to ascertain the precise meaning of the word "*indeed*," in this part of divine inspiration. If it was designed to indicate those widows who preferred continuing such, to forming any connection which would probably at all diminish their Christian usefulness, and growth in grace, Mrs. Egerton was doubtless one of them. Notwithstanding the numerous and flattering proposals of marriage made to her during her widowhood, she preferred, on the whole, "so to remain." This preference arose not, in the least, from anything unsocial or undomestic in her disposition; but wholly from the considerations above alluded to.

In her view, it was not enough even that the partner of a professed Christian should be a professed Christian ; for a union so sacred, on any other principle than this, she considered as altogether out of the question ; but their circumstances, views, and dispositions should be so far congenial, that the connection might be reasonably expected to increase the sum of human happiness. It was, therefore, her uniform practice, feeling her own liability to misjudge of character, to commit the decision of such cases to her heavenly Father ; and, after they were decided, to render unfeigned thanks to him for “ directing her mind on a subject in which she felt willing to rely entirely on the wisdom and mercy of God to direct ; ” and then would she rest “ entirely satisfied, that the matter had been decided right.”

In the year 1826, having come to what she considered a final decision of this nature, she concluded it would be her duty to spend the remainder of her life in a settled habitation. Having therefore purchased a house, near the centre of Randolph, and taking home her two eldest children, she recommenced house-keeping in September of that year.

It was a neat little dwelling, situated a few rods southwest of the meeting-house, and west of the grave-yard, with a small garden lot extending to the north and west. These apparently trifling circumstances may be properly considered characteristic of her taste with regard to what she considered a desirable earthly home—*a convenient situation in which to prepare for her future and eternal one.* *Here*, was a garden and other conveniences for the comfort of her mortal part as long as it should live ; and *there*, a place for its safe deposit when it should live no longer. Close by, was also the place where she could procure weekly supplies for that nobler part which should live forever.

The mansion was not large ; but then it contained apartments of sufficient size, and properly arranged, for holding frequent communion with the King of kings. Besides, it would be easier to set it in order, than if it were large, when she should be called to leave it.

Here, then, she was permitted to enjoy no small portion of domestic comfort, in the society of her children and her Saviour, long enough, in the words of the poet—

“ Just to look about her, and to die.”

From a lengthy article in her journal, written about this time, the following is extracted.

“ *Oct. 11th, 1826.*—Just eleven years since the death of my husband, I have been enabled to go into a house which the Lord is permitting me to call my own. O Lord, I receive this gift as a lent favor from thee. O the unspeakable privilege of having such a home, and of having my unprofitable life, and the lives of my children spared, so that I may receive them again under my own roof, with things convenient for them; and may unite with them around the family altar, in prayer and praise! O Lord, thou knowest my desires for my other child, who is not, in thy providence, permitted to reside with us.

“ Help me to remember all thy dealings with me; for they have been in righteousness; and all my afflictions, while tossed about without any certain dwelling place, have been in faithfulness, blended with unparalleled mercies. I feel that an eternity will not be too long to praise thee for such unmerited favors. How heartily can I adopt the language of Mrs. Graham! ‘ Many ups and downs has thy servant experienced in this vale of tears; many waters have channeled these faded cheeks; in a variety of

ways thou hast stricken, and at times stripe has followed stripe ; but mercy and love accompanied every one of them.' I bless thee, I praise thee, for the discipline of the covenant, though I shall not understand all, until that blessed rod shall have perfected its correction, and shall never more be lifted up.

"My prayer is unto thee, that I may conduct aright in the situation in which thou hast placed me ; that I may not tempt thee to leave me and mine. What can we do without thee ? When thou givest me the things of this world, suffer me not to imbibe the spirit of the world, nor to forget the Giver. Keep us humble, dependent, spiritual. Enable us to receive all through a covenant channel, as the provision of our Father by the way through the wilderness. O may all be sanctified through the word and prayer ; and we be enabled to eat and drink, and do all to thy glory."

Extract of a letter to Miss A. N., a Christian sister, dated Nov. 1826.

"My dear Ann will now find her friend E. engaged at her own household employments,

eating at her own table. I hardly feel right to use this word '*own*,' because of my impressive sense of its being the Lord's, and only lent me for a season. O, my friend, I feel it—I *know it*, that I, an unfaithful servant, have forfeited every mercy at the hand of my kind Preserver. 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all his mercies?' Am afraid of abusing his goodness, and of not making a sanctified use of what he has put into my hands. Will you not help me by your prayers, counsels, and admonitions, to order my household aright, and to walk before the Lord with a perfect heart? Go not upon the supposition *that I do*; but look at my weakness, dependence, liability to temptations, allurements, neglects, indiscretions, &c., when placed at the head of a family without any earthly guide or companion. Look at my need of wisdom and grace, at my responsibility in various ways, especially with regard to my children, and others who may reside with me as boarders. O think of an injured Saviour, if, after all his heavenly chastisements to bring me to his arms, I should not glorify him with my body and spirit which are his. I feel confident of the protection and blessing of Jehovah in this undertaking, so

far as it has been sought by humble prayer, with a right trust, and right motives. And surely any seeming blessing in any other way would be but a transient delusion."

The increasing interest of her letters and diary subsequent to this date, would seem to warrant their insertion entire. But the increasing size of this little volume will still, for the most part, admit of only brief extracts and abstracts; such as will especially illustrate Mrs. Egerton's character and religious history, in the situation in which she is now placed.

"*Jan. 1st.*—On this first day of the year, gratitude to God calls upon me to take a retrospective view of his mercies towards me and mine the year past. Surely my cup has overflowed with mercies, more and greater than I should have dared to ask or even think. An unusual degree of health, employment which my heart desired and asked the Lord for, viz. instructing precious souls; pleasant society; some warm-hearted, endeared friends; and, O what a mercy to name, a home with two of my children, who are pleasant, profitable, and dear

to me. Situated near the house of God, where I enjoy the privileges of his sanctuary and ordinances with a relish for them; with my Bible and Scott's notes, which are a daily feast; other religious books and communications of the most interesting nature from all parts of the world; where shall I stop enumerating mercies? *Do these all flow from a God who will not require anything at my hands in return?* O, no. Lord, teach me what I shall render unto thee for all these mercies. But O, do not let temporal blessings bring leanness into my soul. Wilt thou condescend to go with me every step of the way through life's journey. Thou seest how my children need thine aid; and how I hang upon thy mercy for them. *I will still hang upon thy mercy for them."*

I can hardly forbear to stop here, and ask the reader whether, with all of Mrs. Egerton's blessings, and perhaps many more, he is also blessed with her filial solicitude to make suitable acknowledgments to God for them. If so, he possesses the true secret of earthly happiness.

"Feb. 16th.—O indulgent Parent, thou who hast styled thyself '*the widow's God and Judge* ;'

thou hast been to me more than I could have expected from this tender assurance of thine ;” —alluding again to the mercies of the past year, and especially “ her pleasant situation with her children.” These artless repetitions evidence a depth of parental attachment to them, as well as of filial attachment to her heavenly Parent, which are by no means common to all sustaining these relations.

“ *Feb. 21st.*—Some things have taken place since the last date, which have led me to pour forth fervent supplications to God for his guidance and gracious interposition in my behalf. Mary says, ‘ Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.’ She little thought that her Lord, her Saviour, knew and felt every pang of her heart, and was purposing her relief even when thus accosted. She did not even think that he had such a tender regard for her, as to draw tears from his sacred eyes. Could she ever again distrust the kind care of her compassionate Redeemer ? How many times has he also appeared for me. I will therefore say, ‘ *Lord, if thou wilt be here,* my burdened bosom will be relieved from its present anxieties ; and

the path of duty made plain before me. I cannot move forward without thy direction.

‘ Guide me, O, thou great Jehovah.’

“ *March 6th.*—This day my affectionate child Albert left me—perhaps forever, to enter Dartmouth college. I feel it to be an important crisis in his life. I thank God that mine has been spared to see the day, although it is painful. It is not the thought of his absence that distresses me; but the eternal consequences of this day’s departure. *O Lord, take him, from this hour, I pray thee, from this important day.* Wilt thou make him a vessel of honor, fitted for his Master’s use. I ask not for the honor of this world, the perishing distinctions of life; I ask—I plead, for that honor which cometh from God only, for that grace which flows from thy beneficent hand to lost sinners. And do I not hear thee say—

‘ All needful grace will I bestow,
And crown that grace with glory too? ’”

To Miss A. N., April, 1827.

“ *Dear sister,*—Your two last faithful letters found me sitting like one in a dream, while his sportive imagination is fancying all to be light.

around him, excepting here and there a cloud reflected from the faithful mirror, conscience; yet so meteor like, that he sees not the finger pointing him to that dark abyss which awaits the formal professor and grovelling worldling.—Through the mercy of God, I am so far aroused as to try to make this prayer of the Psalmist my own; ‘Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name.’ O the preciousness of a heavenly Advocate! Yet there is a cloud resting on my mind with regard to taking hold on Christ. Will you throw some light on this subject in your next?

“I know of nothing that can counteract this ‘conformity to the world’ you speak of, but a disposition like our Saviour’s, implanted by his grace. He did not *abandon* society, because there were impurities in it. He ate with publicans and sinners. What he saw positively sinful, he reproved. What was right, he commended. He always aimed at the accomplishment of good, and the acceptance of his heavenly Father; never losing sight of his own great errand on earth—the salvation of souls. He did not lean towards this party or that, to secure the favor of any, or omit any duty for fear of

offending his most intimate friends. It is impossible for me to set any bounds in my own mind with regard to outward things, or personal appearance, any further than this, that a person's judgment ought to be so regulated by the gospel, as never to depart from the strict rules of *Christian propriety*, in conduct, conversation, or modes of dress. One must be his own judge in these things, according to the light thrown upon his mind by divine truth. 'Happy is he that condemneth not himself in the thing which he alloweth.' I do believe the blessing of God will follow a *simplicity of intention to do right in his sight*. Whether our bonnets be *leghorn* or *silk*; whether we visit this neighbor or that, appears to me of little importance, in comparison with the *motive* by which we are actuated. If we are truly aiming at the greatest possible good, according to our own apprehension of duty, I think we shall be accepted, in whatever garb we may be. Aside from this, all our strictness in our intercourse with the world will be but the mark of a Caiaphas or a Judas. Not that a Christian will not be circumspect, but that this is not the criterion by which his character will be decided. He who sent the fair-spoken Ruler

away sorrowful, answered the first desire of a malefactor at the point of death.

“ With regard to ‘ becoming all things to all men,’ I do not know as I can express my views of it to your satisfaction. We have to move in, and mingle with, a world enveloped in moral darkness; who feel no spiritual obligations, and therefore cannot understand the motives of those who do. Should our manner towards such be censorious, or even cold and distant, it would be saying to their understandings, ‘ Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou.’ While this is the case, we can do them no good. A conciliatory spirit, exercising charity in the true sense of the term, will have a tendency to win them to that which is praiseworthy; and thus the way will be paved to carry conviction to their heart. I do not think the passage means that we should become ‘ turn coats,’ and be in one place what we would not be in another; but that we should have discernment enough to meet all classes of people according to their ignorance and prejudices. The apostle says to Timothy, ‘ now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.’ O, my dear Ann, how depen-

dent are we upon that *precious blood of cleansing*, to enable us to act according to the spirit of this passage.

Your own,

“ E. EGERTON.”

To the same, June, 1827.

“ I feel almost guilty to tell you that worldly cares have prevented my writing you! for I know it will give you painful anxieties for my bodily health; but more especially for my spiritual. It was so late in the season before Martha had a call to instruct, that we had concluded she would remain with me. Accordingly, we had just increased our number of boarders to eight, when so favorable an opportunity was offered her for instructing, that I thought it best for her to embrace it. I am therefore left with all this care and confinement upon my own hands.

Albert has just returned to college. These two weeks that I had so much doated upon his being at home, have seemed comparatively but a day. How quickly sped! How poorly improved! all hurry and bustle—‘ Fit emblem of my life,’ thought I, as the stage door closed, and I turned me towards my closet. ‘ The day of *my*

departure also *must and will come.*' A kind of dread foreboding seized me, that my work would not then be well done; having so much proof that the great end of my existence is so crowded out of view, from time to time. * *

"It has been pleasant to see your aged parents again in the land of the living. They number me with their children. I love to own the relation, and faithfully cherish it. Assurances of my tenderest affection for *you* are unnecessary. O may *our spirits never be sundered from each other, nor from our Saviour's love.*

"E. EGERTON."

It has been already hinted, that Mrs. Egerton was permitted to occupy her new earthly home just long enough to prepare for her heavenly one, and "to die." We are now drawing near that solemn event, of which a more particular account will be expected. Nor will it be difficult, so far as facts are concerned, to satisfy this expectation. I love to dwell on scenes like this. And, although years have elapsed since the dreadfully interesting event, yet my memory can as readily recall its prominent circumstances now, as on the day after it transpired. Even now I

seem to be entering again the door of the neat and peaceful mansion; to be stepping silently across the floor of the keeping-room, and casting a cautious glance through the half-shut door of the nurse-room, to see if she were asleep. I seem to behold again her sunken eye, and hear her quick-fetched breath and half-suppressed cough. The medicine on the mantel-piece; the row of books on the neatly spread bureau; the near vale, and more distant Green mountains, at the west window before me; the well dressed "garden of herbs" at my right hand; the church-yard just behind me, all rendered more picturesque by the tints of the setting sun——but softly,—she is awaking. "*I am still here,*" she faintly articulates, as she perceives me near her bed side;—"I expected before now to awake in a different world from this."—But to return.

Not long after the last date, near the end of June, while engaged in her domestic concerns, and much exhausted by the care of boarding a number of students of the Academy, she took a violent cold, from neglecting to guard sufficiently against exposure to the chilling dews of Vermont. This cold settled upon her lungs,

and occasioned a close confinement for several weeks. From this pulmonary affection, however, she partially recovered, and even had hopes of a complete restoration by means of a short journey which she expected to take in September. But these hopes were of short duration; for, in that very journey, the rupture of a blood-vessel was indicated by a profuse hemorrhage from the lungs. She was indeed enabled to return home, but in so weak a state as to be unable to walk or sit for many weeks. She was now considered to be in an awfully critical situation with regard to her earthly existence. "I seem myself," said she, "to be hanging between two worlds." Not that she had much remaining doubt towards which of these worlds the balance would preponderate. That insidious disease had been too familiar to her, from his fatal visits to her parents and her husband, to be now a stranger in his nearer approaches to herself.

She had before this, moreover, had a strong presentiment that her departure was near; and considered it a great mercy that she was allowed of her heavenly Father so favorable a situation in which to prepare for it. "I enjoy," said she to her daughter, before her sickness, "I enjoy too

much happiness in this endeared home, to continue long in it." A similar expectation may perhaps be inferred from the extract last inserted, concerning her son's return to college. She had also a dream, while yet in perfect health, which could hardly fail of producing a monitory impression on her mind. I say a "*monitory* impression;" for although as free from superstitious notions of every kind, as perhaps any person living, yet, according to scripture and her own experience, she firmly believed that a salutary impression of *a truth already revealed*, is frequently made with the greatest force on the mind which sleep has freed from the busy cares of earth. In this instance her fancy had portrayed three suns, a larger one setting before two smaller ones in the eastern horizon—the direction of the church-yard. And who will blame a rational and active mind, ever looking beyond this transitory world, if these circumstances should remind her of the consumptive constitution, and probably early exit of herself and two children then with her, and thus prove the means of quickening her exertions to set her house in order? But few have so constant and realizing an expectation of the approach of

death, as not to be, after all, startled by its actual summons. That this was the case in some measure, even with Mrs. Egerton, may be inferred from an address of her's, which will be inserted in its proper place.

From this confinement she was, however, restored in a few weeks, so far as to be able to sit, to walk the room, and engage in the devotions, and some of the conversations and employments of the family. In this comparatively comfortable situation she continued during most of the months of December, January, and February; enjoying uniformly great tranquillity of mind, an effect, doubtless of that peace of God which passeth all understanding. During this time she was enabled to make an occasional insertion in her journal. The following extracts may suffice to show some of her feelings and reflections at that time.

“ Dec. 9th.—Once more the Lord has permitted me to guide the pen to record his mercies. After a distressing illness of five months, He has so far restored me as to be able in weakness of body to sing his praises, and rejoice in his loving kindness. He has dealt with me still in faith-

fulness and covenant love, not willing that I should perish through a continued round of prosperity. * * * I know not as I have been left, while enjoying this pleasant home, to neglect a formal attention to the duties of the closet, nor any other known duties devolving upon me. But O, how were my seasons of devotion shortened and interrupted by domestic concerns and fatigue, so that, when I left my devotions, my whole mind was again plunged into this vortex of worldly cares. The Lord, in faithfulness to my soul, while I was caring for the body, saw fit to bring upon me a season of affliction, to show me my disobedience to his righteous and merciful command—‘Seek *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added.’ Thus, while I was running away from the fountain, my good Shepherd,—blessed be his name,—with kindly stripes bade me return. O, may I never stray again.

“*Jan. 2d, 1823.*—Being unable to write yesterday, I attempt to-day to record the goodness of God in sparing my life to see the commencement of another year. Three months ago, I had anticipations of being at this time shrouded in the narrow bed ‘appointed for all the living.’

Instead of this, I am now able to walk, to read, to enjoy the society of those dear friends who call upon me ; and some delightful communion with the Friend of sinners, who is ever present with me. My greatest fears are now, that, if I should be blessed with returning health for a season, I should be left to some strange departures from my God, and grieve him again. The thought of banishment from the presence of God is dreadful, even in this world ; but—

‘ O, to be banished for my life,
And yet forbid to die,
To linger in eternal pain,
Yet death forever fly.’

The consciousness of not honoring and glorifying God with my *whole faculties of body and mind*, shows me such depravity of debasement of soul, as to make his grace appear most conspicuous in the salvation of one who is ‘less than the least of all saints,’ if one at all ; and whose awful sentence ‘depart,’ must have been already pronounced, but for the atoning sacrifice of our blessed Redeemer.

“ *Feb. 6th.*—It is pleasant sitting in my own room, and, beholding the open doors of the sanctuary, and brethren and sisters assembling for the worship of Jehovah ; who, in addition to

the common acts of devotion, are this day called to commemorate the dying love of a Saviour. O, blessed privilege! Shall I never enjoy it more on earth?—My God, *thou* knowest. Be this as *thou* wilt. But this one mercy, O Lord, do not deny me; that this seclusion from society, and from thy sanctuary, may be so overruled in thy gracious providence, as to prepare me to join with all true worshippers, among the beloved few I have so often met with, and the thousands who surround thy throne, giving glory to the Lamb forevermore. Amen.”

It will be seen in the sequel that she did *once more* enjoy the sacred ordinance of the Lord’s supper.

“*Feb. 17th.*—I desire to record the goodness of God in enabling me to count forty-four years of pilgrimage on earth. How wonderful that I am spared, while the bodies of most of my youthful companions have long slumbered in dust. And their spirits—where are they? O, whither have they fled? They have done holding converse on earth. But the Lord has shown me, by this protracted illness, that I shall soon meet them. And when the assembled universe

shall be called to stand before their Judge, in the deepest humility of spirit, viewing in the clearness of spiritual vision the blood-bought salvation of one dear Redeemer, we shall say, our eyes streaming with gratitude, 'When saw we thee an hungered and fed thee, or naked and clothed thee,' &c.; or else we must make the guilty appalling plea, 'When saw we thee an hungered, &c. and did *not* minister unto thee?' And O, the final sentence, 'These shall go away—' away from what? away from God our Creator—away from God our Redeemer, who has stood with outstretched arms, pleading with us all our lives—away from holiness, from purity and peace.—O Lord, if it may be thy holy will to spare my life this year also, notwithstanding my many infirmities, may it be to give me more perfect assurance of my union to thee; may I be prepared to seek thy glory in all things, among my friends, in my family, or with the stranger that may sojourn with me. I would sum up the many things I would ask of thee in this one request—that *thy fear may be before my eyes continually*, to keep me strictly obedient to thy requirements; and that I may have the faith of faithful Abraham, not to shrink from

any supposed peril or trial thou shalt be pleased to inflict, whether by adversity, sickness, or death. Then, O Lord, shall I go cheerfully at thy bidding, and have thy presence to deliver me from terror while passing *that dark valley*; and even then have a foretaste of thy blissful presence. This blessing thou hast given me encouragement to ask; and wilt thou give me strength, in thy grace, to believe thou wilt grant it for the Redeemer's sake."

Thus closes her journal; in holy aspirations for that perfect conformity to the will of God, and that perfect enjoyment of the presence of her Saviour, for which she was evidently so fast repining.

Sometime in March, by her particular request, a meeting for prayer and religious conference was held at her house. At this meeting, (being unable to communicate her feelings orally to the brethren and sisters present,) she requested a written address, which she had been preparing with a trembling hand, to be read to them. It was as follows—

"*My dear brethren and sisters,—As I have been for a long time unable, and am still unable*

to converse but little, I have thought it might be gratifying to some or all of you to know something of the state of my mind during this protracted illness. We are commanded to 'speak often one to another;' and I feel that every command of God must be obeyed; not only *may* be, or *ought* to be, but *must* be; and that *speedily*.

"The very first symptom which I considered alarming, brought me immediately, in thought and feeling, before my Judge. I felt that he had called for me at an unexpected hour, and that I was entirely unprepared for the summons. O, my dear friends, could you *now* see, as I *then* saw, the *justice* of God's requirements; could you see his benevolence, also, in making our own happiness a reason of these requirements; could you see how the service of God has been, perhaps by you as well as by me, put off from time to time to make way for some worldly policy, gain or pleasure; could you see something of the sufferings of that dear Saviour, who voluntarily gave his life for sinners, and at the same time remember his many warnings and invitations, and your own resolutions and failures, and realize the patience, and forbearance, and still outstretched arm of our compassionate Redeem-

er;—how would your hearts melt within you! Then would you see and feel the bitterness of sin—of *all* sin—of every departure of *heart* from the living God, in whom alone dwelleth righteousness. Then would a heartless prayer seem enough to sink your souls into perdition. Then would a vile motive, which has self for its object instead of God's glory; and which has perhaps been detected in the very sanctuary of God, or in his more private professed worship—O, how would this, and all other self-deceivings fill you with bitter anguish. Would you not cry, under the hidings of God's face, 'Wo is me, I am undone?' I sensibly felt that I had *destroyed myself*. But the Lord did not leave me long in this state of mind; which I would mention with filial gratitude and adoring praise. I heard his gentle voice saying unto me '*In me is thy help.*' I felt conscious that I believed it; and that his own mercy had pointed out the way, and for his own sake. He had made this provision for the vilest of sinners; which it is most cruel mockery in them, and rebellion of heart, instead of humility for sin—not to accept. Since that time I have felt as though I knew something, by the goodness of God, of the blessedness of pardoned

sin; and that a God of never-ending love, faithfulness and truth, a God hating sin, yet full of forbearance and pity, will not reproach me for saying in humble confidence, '*I am thine, and thou art mine.*' O, my dear friends, look and see what God has done for a guilty world. Look at the promises of the gospel. O, look at the prints of the nails; then press into his arms, and cry "*My Lord and my God.*"

Near the same time she wrote to her son at D. College; an extract from the letter follows.

— ——"Last Saturday I saw Dr. Mussey. I presume you are so prepared, I need use no precaution in telling you, that he thinks there is an ulcerated cavity in the left lobe of my lungs; also an adhesion of the lungs to the chest, which prevents my breath from being drawn from below that adhesion. After examining my side, he laid his hand upon the very spot that has always troubled me, and pronounced it to be there. * * *

"O, my dear Albert, can we unreservedly trust ourselves in the hands of a righteous and gracious God? Can we 'cease from man, *whose breath is in his nostrils,*' and who cannot succor

us in the day of our calamity; and cordially accept of that gracious guidance and protection which our heavenly Father and compassionate Redeemer has offered for our support, while passing through these parting scenes of life? Then shall we meet them with composure; for the *Rock of ages will be our defence and our portion forever*. Do not let your mind be filled with sore forebodings, and fruitless anxieties about me. I have every thing I need from earthly friends; and a kind Saviour who leads me daily, and will tenderly lead me all my journey through; in whose kind hands I leave you, my dear, and all I hold dear on earth. If there is any material alteration in my health, we shall let you know.

“Your affectionate mother,

“EMILY EGERTON.”

I now subjoin an extract from her last effort at writing. It was made in the latter part of March, in a letter directed to a Christian sister then in Massachusetts, who was afterwards present with her, till the closing scene.

“*My dear A——*,—Through the kindness of your friends I hear from you once in a while,

The last information rejoiced us greatly. We had been apprehensive of a decline. *Do, my dear sister, be careful of your health*, that you may not by your imprudence, do less good in the world than your Creator has originally given you ability to accomplish. Many salutary lessons may be learned from sickness ; yet this does not lessen our obligations to use means to preserve our health, that we may not be obliged to offer to the Lord the ‘ maimed, the halt, and the blind.’ I feel myself not entirely innocent with regard to the loss of this blessing ; I have surely been innocent in design, but not in practice.

* * * * About the first of this month I began to have regular chills every day, followed by fever. Since that time, my appetite has been poor, cough has increased, and strength failed. — Thus you see, my dear Ann, *my life hangs on a mere spider’s web, trembling with every breath, anxiously waiting the heavenly summons*. I have, for the greater part of my sickness, enjoyed a good degree of tranquillity of mind. O, am I deceived when I say that *I do trust my all in the hands of my compassionate Redeemer* ? I think I can cast myself upon him with all my sin ; but never could, till I saw that

I must come helpless and defiled as I am ; and be willing and believe, that Christ will take me from the dunghill, and take away all my pollution, and accept me FOR HIS OWN DEAR SAKE. I want to write more ; but feel myself too much fatigued.—Give my regards to your parents and friends.—The Lord is kind, and will do right, whether our next meeting be in this world or the next.

“ Most cordially your grateful

“ EMILY EGERTON.”

Having written this, she laid aside her pen—to resume it no more forever. Meanwhile the most approved remedies, prescribed by the most skilful physicians, and administered by the most tender and assiduous of nurses, were no longer productive of any beneficial effect ; and the slender filament on which her life hung,—to use her own figure, was frequently well nigh broken. Seasons of excruciating pain were occasionally shaking the foundations of her clay tenement, and the time of her departure seemed to be at hand.

It was during one of these seasons that she could not help remarking on the kindness of her

heavenly Father, “ in permitting *all* her children to come home to see her die ; ”—alluding to the unexpected arrival of her son from college, and of a young lady from a distance, to whom she had formerly acted the part of a mother. She had not, however, fully closed her testimony for the truth as it is in Jesus ; for which purpose her life was yet to be prolonged a few weeks. During this interval she was enabled to read a little, give important instructions to her children, and join in the prayers and conversation of her friends, sometimes with an audible and even a firm voice. Indeed the sudden renewal of her strength was sometimes remarkable. I recollect once in particular, when she had scarcely been able for some time to endure the exertion of a whisper, after joining in a prayer in which she appeared to be much interested, she was enabled to converse on heavenly things for considerable time, in a voice so strong, that she could be heard and understood in an adjoining room.

I shall attempt to give a few of her occasional remarks during the latter part of her confinement, but regret that they must be very much circumscribed by the prescribed limits of this little work, and by the remote residence of the

Christian sister before alluded to ;—who has probably treasured more of these remarks than any other person.

During the month of May, when a casual allusion was made in her room on the pleasant atmosphere and beautiful and blushing scenery without, she observed, “I am almost afraid to look upon the lovely face of the natural world, lest I should see some object that would call me back to earth. But, if I should be so happy, through rich grace, as to reach yonder blessed world—

‘There everlasting spring abides,
And never with’ring flowers,’—

and there will be no more danger of gazing on the most perfect created beauty ; for it will have no power to draw my affections from the uncreated source of all beauty and perfection.—Yet,” said she, musing, “yet

‘Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours.’”

Although she had been extremely self-diffident during the years of health and activity ; yet, as her “outward man” was perishing, her “inward man was renewed day by day.”—“Though the pains of death” she said, “may have in

them something terrifying, yet I have nothing to fear after death—when “cometh the judgment;” for “*I know that my Redeemer liveth.*”—Yet so mercifully did he deal with her, that even from the pains of death, she seemed to be in a measure saved; as it will probably appear by the sequel that her bodily suffering was by no means so great then, as it had been often before. During one of these excruciating turns, she remarked with much resignation and affiance in her tone and countenance, “I think I have committed to God *that which I would not take back.*” She was still quite suspicious of herself; and had a very low view of those Christian attainments and actions which were so decisive of her discipleship in the view of others. Emphatically was the name of her divine Master “*written in her forehead,*” a place the most conspicuous to beholders, but the least so to herself.

“*June 5.—Last evening,*” writes a particular friend in his journal, “I called on our dear Mrs. Egerton. The first expression of her feeble voice was ‘*I stay yet,* for some reason, *I* know not what.’ Being asked how life appeared to her on the retrospect—‘Short,’ she replied, ‘very short; a few days and full of vanity.’

“ ‘Does the atonement still appear precious?’

“ ‘O, yes. I have no other hope. If I am ever so happy as to reach those blessed mansions—the *lowest place* will be too good for me. Through rich grace alone can I ever be saved.’

“ ‘Do you love the character of God, as far as you understand it?’ ‘O, yes!’ she exclaimed with affectionate solemnity. ‘I cannot be deceived,’ continued she, ‘as to the correctness of my faith and Christian principles in general. But I have been so deficient in an ardent particular attachment to my blessed Saviour, that I have been unfaithful, inactive—done next to nothing for his cause. I look around on my fellow creatures, professors of his name, and see them also dead like myself.’

“ She then exclaimed with an emphatic pathos and sublimity of thought and manner which I cannot soon forget—

“ ‘Oh, it seems as if he would sit upon his throne of glory, and mourn over the coldness and inactivity of his professed followers!’

“ About three weeks before her departure, she said ‘I am afraid I have got into a stupid frame, and am enjoying a false peace. I have thought I had done and said every thing which I knew

of, with regard to my own preparation and the good of those around me; and yet *I am here*—yet his chariot wheels delay. I fear there is still some great work remaining undone. O, pray that I may be shown what it is, before I go hence to be here no more.’ ”

Not far from this time, her strong desire to “commemorate once more on earth the dying dove of her Saviour,” (*See Journal, Feb. 6, 1828,*) having been communicated to her worthy pastor, he called on her for that purpose, accompanied by a few of the Christian brethren. An ordinance so interesting under any circumstances, could not but be rendered still more so by the peculiarity of the present.

She, for whose sake especially it was administered, was reclining in an arm-chair placed near her bed, and directly opposite to the open door of her nurse-room;—clad in a simple robe of white. Her countenance, emaciated by disease, was scarcely less white; but on it were deeply depicted the serenity of resignation, the joy of hope, and the humble gratitude of him who is conscious he can be saved from merited destruction only by the death of his best friend. Close

beside her sat a select few of the sisters; while the other communicants occupied the adjacent room. Throughout the little assembly there reigned the silence of the most intense interest, and the solemnity of those eternal scenes, which every thing present seemed to force irresistibly on the mind.

Her habiliments were not so white as the spotless robe of righteousness in which she was doubtless soon to be arrayed; for her death-like countenance plainly told that she would “drink no more of the fruit of the vine, till she should drink it new with her Saviour in the kingdom of his Father.” And, when the man of God said “Take—eat, in remembrance of me,” it seemed to be the voice of Jesus himself, who had already opened the door of heaven, and stood waiting to “Dry the mourners tears, and take the exile home.”

The imagination could follow her then no further; but, forced to take leave thus at the very gate of heaven, her condition seemed almost to be envied, from the prospect that her warfare was so nearly accomplished; and so soon, with her, “Death” would be “swallowed up in victory.”

At the close of the affecting scene, her feeble voice was heard commingling with the others in the following appropriate song of Zion, of her own selecting.—

“ ‘The promise of my Father’s love
Shall stand forever good’—
He said, and gave his soul to death,
And seal’d the grace with blood.

To this dear covenant of thy word
I set my worthless name ;
I seal the engagement to my Lord,
And make my humble claim.

Thy light, and strength, and pardoning grace,
And glory, shall be mine :
My life and soul, my heart and flesh,
And all my powers—are thine.

I call that legacy my own,
Which Jesus did bequeath—
’Twas purchas’d with a dying groan,
And ratified in death.

Sweet is the memory of His name
Who blessed us in his will,
And, to his testament of love,
Made his own life the seal.”

On Sabbath, the last day of June, hearing that she was not quite so comfortable, I called upon her towards evening. The same Christian sister, to whom her last letter was addressed, had been sitting by her during the afternoon, and been favored with much of her edifying discourse. After conversation, singing a hymn, and prayer, all of which exercises she appeared

to enjoy in an uncommon degree,—perceiving her to be fatigued, yet observing no visible change in her appearance, I proposed leaving her for the night, and asked, if she had any previous request to make. She reached to me the little New Testament, which had so long been her friend and constant companion.

“If,” said she, “you should be in town at the time of my dissolution, I wish you would request Mr. E***** to preach my funeral sermon from *that passage*,” pointing to Rev. xv. 4. “*Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name; for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.*” “Sister A.,” she continued, “will explain my wishes further to you.” She also selected two of the hymns she wished to be sung on the occasion—the 49th H., B. 1, of Worcester’s Watts, commencing thus—

“Christ has done more than Moses did.”

And the 222d select hymn of Worcester, commencing with—

“While on the verge of life I stand.”

We then took leave, expecting to see her again in the morning. Pensively walking from

the sick room together, A. told me that, in the course of the afternoon, Mrs. E. had explained to her the particular use she wished to have made of the proposed text, at her funeral. She might thus, after she was "dead, yet speak," for the cause of him she loved, and the salvation of immortal souls. The sick disciple wished to have peculiar stress laid on the words, "Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, for thou only art holy," as a warning against the delusive hope, that there will be no distinction in the eternal world, between him that feareth and serveth God, and him that feareth him not."

"A cause of fear," she said, "will be immediately before their eyes. My coffin will speak to them of the king of terrors—of God's holy hatred of sin;—'by one man sin entered into the world, and *death* by sin.' Yes, he hates sin, so that his 'judgments' are daily 'made manifest;' and this one 'has passed upon all men.' His own children, that he loves, must die; and even his own dear son must leave his bosom and die, by reason of sin. Who, then, shall not fear God; and be so affected by a view of such dispensations as to repent and believe on Christ, and thus 'glorify the name'

of his Maker; and become the subject of that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. For, if he spared not his own sinless Son, how can he spare him that still cleaves to his sin, and continues to reject him who was made sin for us?" But I cannot here detail all her wishes with regard to the sermon. They were committed to writing at full length, to be presented to our pastor.

Alas! how little did we expect they would be needed so soon. The very next morning I was awakened by the sorrowful intelligence, that "dear sister Egerton has gone!" We had particularly requested the family to give seasonable notice of any alarming change of symptoms, whenever it might occur; wishing very much to be present when her spirit should take its flight. But death had been too sudden for our plans. It seems that "at midnight the cry was made, behold the Bridegroom cometh,"—for at this solemn hour, she was seized with a violent hemorrhage, and could just articulate to her children, who were hastily summoned, "*I am bleeding to death.*" In a few moments the physician was present. But it was *too late*. The immortal part had fled; and its deserted tenement needed medical aid no more.

How often had the heart which had now ceased to palpitate, and the voice which was to sound no more forever, conspired in feeling and singing—

“Thine earthly Sabbaths, Lord, we love;
But there’s a nobler rest above ;—

And how consolatory the reflection, that now, precisely as she had finished the one, she had doubtless entered on the full and everlasting enjoyment of the other.

On the Tuesday following, after an appropriate discourse on the subject and the plan of her own suggesting, her mortal remains were laid in the narrow bed ; to sleep “till the heavens be no more,”—when “the trumpet shall sound, and she shall be raised, and that mortal shall put on immortality, and be fashioned like unto Christ’s glorious body, and be ever with the Lord.”

These were doubtless the reflections of more than one of that uncommonly large concourse of mourning friends who witnessed the solemn scenes ; and who on re-entering the now lonely mansion, could not forbear giving expression to their feelings, by singing the following lines of Watts, in those affecting tones of Handel’s “*Dead march in Saul*.”

“Unveil thy bosom, faithful tomb ;
Take this new treasure to thy trust ;
And give these sacred relics room
To slumber in the silent dust.
Nor pain, nor grief, nor anxious fear
Invade thy bounds. No mortal woes
Can reach the peaceful sleeper here,
While angels watch the soft repose.
So Jesus slept ;—God’s dying Son
Passed through the grave and blessed the bed.
Rest here, blest saint, till from his throne
The morning break, and pierce the shade.
Break from his throne, illustrious morn ;
Attend, O earth, the solemn word ;
Restore thy trust,—a glorious form,—
Call’d to ascend and meet the Lord.”

CHAPTER VI.

Brief view of her character.

HAVING thus committed all that was mortal of Emily Egerton, to the tomb, and her immortal spirit to God who gave it ; let us now pause, and briefly contemplate some of those characteristic excellencies, which still live on earth.

If it is proper, however, to cast yet a lingering look at that in which some of these characteristics were once embodied ; I would just remark as to her person, that she was small in stature ; of a rather delicate countenance, and regular features ; dark hair, and dark blue eyes ; with a pleasant but serious countenance, habitually expressive of cheerful serenity.

Among her traits of character, that which will be first mentioned, as holding a prominent place, is

DECISION. As illustrative of this, the reader

may be referred to the incident with regard to the evening party, already related in Chap. II.;—to the discussion of her religious views with her husband, in Chap. III.;—and to her recommencing of study during her widowhood, to qualify herself for instructing. I will here add only one more instance of the many which might be adduced. As soon as her eldest son had become hopefully pious, she had a strong desire that he might obtain a liberal education, and become prepared to preach the everlasting gospel. But, supposing her want of funds would render this impracticable, she had nearly relinquished the idea, when a literary friend, relating his own experience on the subject, she said in her heart—“*Albert CAN get an education*;—and immediately set about removing the remaining obstacles,—procured his release from one excellent home, found him another, where he could receive instruction at a classical academy, and his board for laboring a part of each day; and on her death-bed, had the satisfaction of seeing him nearly through a course of study in one of the best New England colleges.

This fixedness of purpose, however, was in her case not so much the result of constitutional

temperament, as of the divine principle of faith. Hence it manifested itself, especially in her religious concerns. The grand question with her was,—“Lord, what *wilt thou* have me to do?” And whatever the answer might be, the grand practical maxim of her life was, as in the language of her address—“*Every command of God must be obeyed*; not only may be, and ought to be, *but must be, and that speedily.*” Whatever means, therefore, God had evidently appointed for securing her own everlasting happiness and that of others, these means were perseveringly resorted to. Frequently has she been known to break over the obstacles presented by a large number of family boarders, or of a large school, to attend a distant religious meeting; or to receive one into her house; or to solicit contributions for the benevolent operations of the age. Wherever she was expected to be present—whether at the female prayer-meeting, the conference, the charitable society, the Sabbath school, the lecture, or the church—whoever else might be absent, there she was sure to be found at the time appointed, unless prevented by sickness. The calls of friendship, or domestic cares, some of which too often prevent the

attendance of female professors, amounted to no sufficient excuse, either in her views or her practice, for neglecting any of those duties which are paramount to all others.*

The same remark is also applicable to her exercises for personal improvement, religious and intellectual. She had been at some pains to procure a set of Scott's Family Bible, as a help to a correct understanding of divine truth. Nor was she to be prevented by secular avocations from perusing it daily and prayerfully in retirement; nor from a careful perusal of the valuable religious periodicals, in addition to her more common reading; nor from consulting her spiritual and intellectual improvement, along with the happiness of others, by the habitual use of the pen. Her journal, epistolary writing, essays, and poetic effusions now before me, furnish abundant evidence of her persevering industry in this exercise, even to the last. Notwithstanding her dependent situation, and the pressure of her engagements, volumes might be filled with what she wrote during a few of the latter years of her life.

* She was in the constant habit of conducting social worship with her own family, as well as with her school, in the absence of a leader of the other sex.

Mrs. Egerton's decision of character, however, consisted not at all in that *positiveness* of assertion, and precipitancy of action, which some suppose the term to imply. For I have yet to mention another no less prominent trait; with which the former was united, and by which it was peculiarly modified. I refer to that mild and retiring

MODESTY, which ever constitutes one of the brightest gems in the diadem of female excellence. She was emphatically, *a woman*—in the distinguishing and exalted sense of the term. Her very countenance would carry a conviction of this to the eye of the beholder; and the ear that heard her would be sensible that the “law of kindness was in her tongue;” and the soul of every intimate friend would feel that it was deeply engraven on her heart. Hence that serenity of mien, so uniformly conspicuous in her through all the changing scenes of life, and even in its closing scene, that a stranger might be led to query whether it might not arise in some degree, from a stoical temperament. But a more close observer could not fail to discern, that, if her affections were under an unusual degree of self-restraint, they were also unusu-

ally ardent ; that, if, like Joseph of old, she could refrain herself in the presence of her brethren ; yet, like him also, she was compelled not unfrequently to “turn away her face and weep.” During the unusually trying scenes through which she was called to pass, those who had opportunity to notice her external appearance, observed habitually an expression of that same mild serenity, which characterized her countenance at other times. And yet enough extracts from her writings have been exhibited, to convince the reader that her grief must have been of no ordinary degree of poignancy. Another evidence of this affectionate mildness is to be found in the universal attachment of children, and her consequent success in managing them, in the nursery and the school-room. Every little one that knew “Aunt Egerton,” loved her. It is a maxim of common observation, that “like begets like.” If they loved her, therefore, it was because she first loved them ; she exhibited towards them that same gentleness of conduct and tenderness of affection, from which female excellencies, adults any more than children, cannot withhold the homage of their affectionate respect. This is evident from the large con-

course who followed her remains to the grave, many of them besides the relatives, in the external habiliments of grief.

In fine, it was a sentiment expressed by one of her acquaintances, of more than ordinary discernment of character, and responded to by them all, that he had never known the individual who more admirably united in his own character GENTLENESS AND FIRMNESS, than Mrs. E. Egerton.

To these characteristics was joined a large share of what is usually termed, "GOOD COMMON SENSE," or a *sense of propriety* manifested in discreetly adapting her conduct to her circumstances.

I cannot better illustrate my views of this trait, than by referring again to the extract of a letter to Miss A. N., which is found in Chap. V., under the date of April, 1827,—commencing especially with the sentence—"It is impossible for me to set any bounds in my own mind with regard to outward things, or personal appearance," &c. The general views contained in this extract, appear to have been habitually acted out in her life. To be "blameless and harmless," "to walk circumspectly," and not

let her "good be evil spoken of;" these appeared in her view, far more desirable attainments, than much of that imposing zeal, which might lead its possessor, by a rash expression or unguarded action, to undo in a moment the well-meant labor of years. Hence, few were the occasions in which any one could censure her conduct, or even misconstrue her motives.

As a *professor of the Christian religion*, Mrs. Egerton had drank deeply into its characteristic spirit of that CHARITY which "seeketh not her own;" or good will to man growing out of love to God.

As in the language of one of her private resolutions, she appeared habitually to "strive *to make every one happy* she had anything to do with, from a *sense of what she owed to God*."

Her benevolent exertions for the welfare of the rising generation, have been already noticed. In addition to her more private efforts, she had instructed in a day school, as well as Sabbath school for a number of the last years of her life; and indeed she held the office of Sabbath school teacher when she was called to leave the world.

Nor were her philanthropic desires and exertions confined to those about her. Like those

of the great Missionary to the Gentiles, they extended also to "those who had never seen her face in the flesh." She had early imbibed an ardent desire for the salvation of the heathen, and a strong interest for the cause of missions among them. The monthly concert of prayer furnished her a precious opportunity of bestowing her alms with her prayers on this grand object; an opportunity which no common avocation could prevent her carefully improving. Nor were these monthly contributions, in her view, sufficient. She gave, besides, a liberal offering from year to year, as the Lord had prospered her; and made a bequest of "what she could" at her death, at which time she also held the office of collector for the "ladies' association" in Randolph, auxiliary to the American Board.

The following incident may serve to illustrate her disposition on this subject:—"Feathers show which way the wind blows." Having once occasion to go to a missionary charity-box, which stood in an unlocked secretary, I was surprised to find *ten silver dollars* piled upon its cover; much like the loaves of consecrated bread upon the Levitical table. Whence they

came, I could not conjecture ; nor was it ascertained, till some time afterwards, that it was a thank-offering of this *poor widow* to the Lord, who had put it into the heart of an old debtor of her husband's to pay her this sum which she had never expected to receive.

Her benevolence also manifested itself in her spirit of liberality towards Christians of different denominations. "Charity thinketh no evil." Whenever she met with a disciple of her own Master, by whatever name distinguished, she gave to such an one the same cordial reception and fraternal fellowship as to one of her own communion.

If I proceed to state, in the language of Scripture, that "charity vaunteth not itself, and is not puffed up,"—I shall but state another prominent trait in Mrs. Egerton's Christian character—

HUMILITY. Although this is closely allied to that native modesty already mentioned, it is not precisely the same. It is one thing instinctively to shrink from the imagined superiority of one's fellow creatures ; and another thing to prostrate one's self before the infinite majesty and purity of his Creator. The subject of these memoir's evidently did both.

“Wo is me,” exclaimed the Prophet, “for I am undone, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” “It is not enough that I have been gratified ;—*God must be also glorified.*” This appeared to be the language of more than her pen or her tongue. A frequent view of the glorious perfections of God, and of his most righteous *claims* upon her person and services ; and a corresponding sense of her deficiency with regard to constantly aiming at his glory in all that she did, led her to reckon herself as “*less than the least of all saints, if one at all.*” Hence those numerous expressions of self-loathing, and those complaints of her vileness of motive and feeling, so frequent and grievous, that a stranger to experimental religion would be liable to misapprehend her character from her writings.

Indeed if there were any defect in the character of her religious experience, especially the earlier part of it, this defect consisted in viewing her spiritual disease more intensely than she did the gracious remedy provided. Thus, during much of her religious course, was she subject to a legal bondage ; until enabled at last to say with one of the apostles, “This a faith-

ful saying, and worthy of all acceptance,—that Christ Jesus came into the world *to save sinners of whom I am chief.*” Then, with admiring Thomas, could she exclaim—“*my Lord, and my God!*” in whom, notwithstanding her extreme vileness in her own sight, though now she saw him not, “yet believing, she could still rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

I have said, “*If there were any defect,*” not because I consider her to have been perfect, or am at all attempting to exhibit an eulogy instead of her true character. But in this imperfect state, where one, at best, sees spiritual things but “*through a glass darkly,*” it is difficult to decide correctly concerning another’s religious views and springs of action. She probably understands her religious character herself far better *now*, than she did when describing her exercises in her diary. And, were it possible to suppose she could leave the angelic employments of the last three years, and revisit the scenes and friends of her earthly existence, might she not be still more unwilling than formerly to have anything said of her Christian attainments? Would not this record of her humility, as a characteristic trait of her religion,

occasion her peculiar pain? But she is *not* any more an inhabitant of earth. Would that the professed disciples of Jesus who *are*, may all furnish good grounds for *conjecturing* that they have made as great attainments in this primary Christian grace.

But, with regard to those traits of her Christian character which depend on evidence more palpable, we can have something more than conjecture. Of these, I shall yet mention but one,—

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS—or a strict and constant regard to the voice of duty.

Mention has already been made of her untiring perseverance in the use of the means of grace. Yet even the characteristic decision there spoken of, was itself, in her case, probably owing not more to anything original in her intellectual constitution, than to the same divinely wrought principle of conscientious faithfulness in the discharge of duty.

Speaking once of a brother and sister of her acquaintance—"L***," said she, "appears to be conscientious;—there is hope in her case. She recently inquired of me whether it would be right for her to take passage in a stage, that

would not arrive at her father's house till about sunrise, Sabbath morning. But her brother S****, I fear, is a ruined youth. He appears to have *no conscience toward God.*" These expressions show how deeply the importance of this subject was impressed upon her principles of action. Enough has been exhibited of her writings, to show that her practice corresponded with her principles. To be convinced of this, one need only revert to a single extract from her diary, and recollect what pungent feelings of grief and remorse were occasioned by a single instance of neglect in the duty of praying with her scholars. Those, however, who understood her every-day management of her school, and her family, are best acquainted with this trait in her character.

There is, therefore, one view yet to be taken, —exhibiting not so much any distinct trait as a combination of the whole. I refer to her character as

A CHRISTIAN MOTHER. She seems all along to have been listening to a voice from heaven saying unto her, "*Take this child, and nurse it FOR ME;*" and to have habitually felt, that, as she was actually training her children for an

immortal existence, she ought to train them for Him who made them immortal—for usefulness on earth, and happiness in heaven.

Hence all her plans were laid with a principal reference to these grand results. In their education, therefore, she was careful to regard their whole nature ; corporeal and moral, as well as intellectual. When, by the death of their father, it became necessary to place them in other hands, her great solicitude was to find them homes, where they would be likely to learn bodily and mental industry ; correct moral habits ; and above all, the love and fear of their Creator and Redeemer. Nor did she at all relax in her faithful endeavors for their welfare, after such homes, as she supposed, had been obtained. “ It may be my children have cursed God, or blessed themselves, in their heart. It may be that they have grown remiss in that which is good, or have been drawn aside to that which is evil.” None but He that knows all things could know the extent and constancy of her parental solicitude, or the many fervent prayers offered for them in secret. But some of the external actions of these yearnings of soul could be noticed by those conversant with

the many social prayers offered, and verbal and epistolary warnings, and encouragements, and suggestions given them, and to others for them, even till her "prayers and tears" were at least exchanged for hallelujahs. Many times, while on a visit at their homes, has she been known to take them into a separate apartment to converse and pray with them; and when circumstances would not permit this, or when she learnt, in her absence, the exposure of any one of them to any peculiar temptation, or sin, she would not fail to warn him of it by a faithful and affectionate letter. Eternity alone will show how vast are their obligations, as well as those of their guardians, for these offices of kind and timely assistance. If others were attempting to assist in bearing her children along through this rugged maze, her faithful spirit would prompt her at least to assist in staying up their benefactor's hands.

Her parental management was deeply marked with her characteristic mildness and decision. Faithfulness was so mingled with her tenderness, and discretion with her sympathy, that the early confidence instinctively reposed in her by her children, was strengthened in proportion as

their unfolding judgment convinced them more and more that this confidence was well placed. She was their counsellor, as well as their confidant. Her pleasure was their law and their delight, "they knew not why, and cared not wherefore." There are parents, who, so far from the necessity of laying a formal injunction or prohibition on their children, seem to a by-stander scarcely to have occasion to administer formal advice. The living soul of the parental excellencies appears to be so transfused into them, that they may be said to breathe the same spirit, and almost to act the same actions habitually. Towards this enviable perfection Mrs. Egerton had made no inconsiderable advances.

In promoting their intellectual improvement she also took unwearied pains, especially while they were yet with her. "*Read and you will know, my child,*" said the mother of Sir W. Jones. So, emphatically, said the practice of her of whom I speak. She accustomed her children, from their earliest years, to read much aloud in her presence. And her peculiar way of familiar explanation and mental interrogation, excited in them a juvenile interest and inquisi-

tiveness which would not only secure a knowledge and retention of what was read, but would naturally lay a much broader foundation for future improvement. Children thus instructed have not the necessity, as is otherwise too often the case, of commencing the very *alphabet of thinking*, as well as laying in the materials of thought, after they are old enough to learn their value by the little experience of their want. This habit of investigating and close thinking, she endeavored to promote while she was yet with them, not merely an inhabitant of the same house but of the same world. On inquiring concerning the comparative advantages of two colleges, she was told that one of them was better adapted to give the student a polished exterior, and the other to give him a habit of studious retirement—"This," said she, "is the institution for my son ; I do not wish him to mingle much with the world, till his mental foundation is laid so deep and large as not to be blown about by the breath of every popular sentiment"—or words to this effect.

Evidences of her parental faithfulness have been already exhibited from her writings. To these, I shall now add a few more promiscuous

extracts more or less illustrative of some of the above remarks.

“Friday morning, July 1st, 1824.

“Albert, my child,—I heartily approve of your asking my advice concerning the celebration”—[of the day of our National Independence.] “Yet I tremble to answer you, because of my limited views of such things. I do not know the necessity of them; nor whether any benefit is to be derived from them. I suppose reverence for our forefathers who took their lives in their hands to obtain their freedom; love to our country, laws, institutions, &c.,—are generally urged as motives for noticing this day in the form of a celebration. It is true, men have been instrumental in procuring these great blessings, for which we are so distinguished. Yet, what could men have done, had it not been for the ‘right hand of the Lord?’ I fear it must be provoking to his holiness to be forgotten in the scenes of that day, while all our praises are lavished upon men and their measures.

“Is this thing approved of by Mr. N.? Do the religious part of your literary society—if

there are such belonging to it—feel it their duty to join—or is it to be carried on by those who appear to be entirely carnal in their views and feelings? If this is the case, and those who know better than I do, should contrast the supposed advantages and necessity of your attending (arising from your relation to the society) with the snares and temptations presented to the mind on such occasions—if these, and especially Mr. N. who knows something of your disposition and propensities, should then advise you not to attend, or not to dine with the rest; I would have you unhesitatingly, with frankness and decision, *feel*, if not say—‘I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and keep thy precepts.’ And further pray—‘Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed.’ Do not have a hankering for that which is not best for you. If it is thought best for you to attend by spiritually minded people, and your own conscience,—who, I hope will always be your counsellors,—I would not have you absent yourself from the table, from pecuniary considerations. If you can refuse without any degradation of character, I think a dollar thrown into the treasury to procure liberty for the poor Africans

would be much better spent. Toasts after dinner seem *to me* like 'eating and drinking—then rising up to play.' I am not *certain* that there may not be a justifiable motive for the practice, and that more knowledge on the subject would not give me different views. Can you abstract your mind from the intended display of next Tuesday, and fix it upon the dying love of Christ which is to be brought to view next Sabbath? Do not sell your birthright for a mess of pottage. Do not betray your Master by feasting your imagination with tinsel. I know circumstances must be considered; but let it be in conjunction with—'*Seek first the kingdom of God.*' By taking things the other end foremost, as Mr. Lyman says, you cannot secure your reputation—much less your pleasurable reflections hereafter.

"I trust you will weigh the matter thoroughly, especially considering what will be most likely to secure God's blessing. Then take your choice, whether to spend your dollar at the dinner table, or throw it into the charity box, for the purpose before mentioned. If it should appear duty to choose the latter, state your motive fairly to the society, without a shrinking

fear of ridicule. * * * * * I do not know whether Martha will have an inclination to attend at the meeting-house;—if she should have, I hope Mrs. N. will decide as to the propriety of it.

“Your affectionate mother, “E. E.”

To the same.

Randolph, W. Village.

“*Albert*,—You will feel as much disappointed on opening this, as you thought I should be on receiving a line from you.

“I feel almost continual anxiety for A**, lest he should grow up in ignorance of himself, or of his duty towards God or man. I hope the Lord will be better to me than my fears; yet I know he is in imminent danger; [referring, probably, to his being deprived of the opportunity of a regular attendance on public worship;] and I want to watch every opportunity that may be improved for his benefit. You will probably see him training-day. I wish you would rather urge upon him an attendance upon the Sabbath school; or find out by him, if you can, whether he can get up to the meeting-house on the Sabbath; and how he spends his Sab-

baths at home ; or whether he has any sense of the sacredness of the day. I feel that some energetic measures must be adopted with regard to his turn of mind ; or he will become like the senseless block through ignorance, or bigotted against the truth through bad examples, and the want of salutary precepts. We must bear his case in mind, and do what we can for him. My only hope is in ‘God my rock,’ who has ever been my helper,—in Him will I trust.

“ My health is much better than I have lately enjoyed—thanks to the Giver !

“ I hope you and M. will gratify me with a few lines occasionally. Do not be afraid of disappointing me with your *small things*. I would not give a farthing for any display of talent where there is no simplicity joined with godly sincerity, no *naturalness* of character, tenderness of conscience, &c. * * *

“ Your affectionate mother, “ E. E.”

To her daughter—written in 1822.

“ *Martha*,—I have just time to remind you, my dear, of what your uncle told me he enjoined on you,—to get the articles of faith, and the church covenant, and read them. I do not

expect you can fully understand and digest every point of doctrine, so as to give a satisfactory answer to any one who might inquire of you with a view to perplex your mind. You are yet a child. But, Martha, fear God, and devote yourself with your whole heart to his service; and whatever you promise by giving your assent to in this covenant, you will perform, his grace assisting you. Plead with Him to enable you to perform it acceptably. He will not be mocked with impunity. Be afraid to neglect any known duty, lest God should be angry, and cease to strive with you and teach you. Then, to whom would you turn? what would you be? or who would plead for you at the bar of God? You need never to be afraid to perform things which some may think unnecessary, if the performance accords with the general tenor of Scripture, and a Christian spirit is promoted by it. Love your uncle; be tender towards him. Be careful that you do not indulge any improper thoughts concerning him; and especially that you do not speak to his disadvantage. Pray for him. I never felt more tender towards him, nor a stronger disposition to pray for him. O it is a blessed thing to be a Christian!

“YOUR MOTHER.”

To her daughter—dated,

“Sept. 4th, 1824.

“*Martha, my dear,*—I suppose my anxiety and carefulness for you can never cease, till the thread of life is spun—till the last pulse shall cease to beat.* Still I profess not to hold you as my own, and daily implore the God of mercy, who has thus far spared your life and mine, and whose you are, that He would make you a subject of His renovating grace; and that it may be for His own glory to give you such a character as He will delight to own and bless.

* In a retired corner of the burying-ground in Hudson, Ohio, overhung by spreading trees, there now stands a new-made grave; on the stone of which is the following inscription:—

MARTHA EGERTON WRIGHT,
Wife of Asher Wright, Missionary among the Senecas;
Daughter of

Asa and Emily Egerton, and adopted daughter of Rufus and M. M. Nutting;—
Was called to rest from her labors
Jan. 7, 1832, aged 23 years.

* * * * *

Devoted to God, beloved of man,—for the cause of Him in whom she trusted,
“She hath done what she could.”

But—

“She was not, for God took her.”

“Blessed is he, whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing.”

Thus did the affectionate mother’s “last pulse cease to beat,” and the beloved daughter cease to need her anxious care, in such quick succession;—and both mother and daughter have doubtless reunited in adoring Him who led them safely through!

Martha’s story, after her mother left her, is quickly told.—Those whom she now called “parents,” and who called her “daughter,” about that time commencing a residence in Ohio, she tarried still in New England to complete her education. Here she became the partner of the Rev. Asher Wright. But the bleak winds of the Eastern coast had occasioned the appearance of her hereditary complaint while a member of Miss Grant’s school, in the Spring of 1831; and, ere they could join their station, near Buffalo, N. Y. her health had

“ Since you have been committed to the care of those dear and faithful friends, whose unparalleled kindness can never be highly enough appreciated by you, I have said little to you about your outward conduct. I have fully and confidently believed *they* would instil into your mind such principles of action as will be right for you at all times to maintain. Still, in common with our fallen race, you need ‘line upon line; precept upon precept; here a little and there a little;’—and with all this you will never be able, as were not the children of Israel, to expel the Canaanites utterly from the coast. No, Martha, I expect this, believing that you have already been shown that you have sinful pro-

declined so rapidly, that she seemed to need the milder climate of Ohio, and the attention of her parental friends. But, on her reaching their abode in November, (after a short stay at the mission house) the disease had progressed too far to be arrested by any change of climate or circumstances; and on Saturday, Jan. 7, she cheerfully committed her spirit to the faithful hands of that Saviour whom she had been enabled to love and serve for the last ten years—with a hope full of immortality.—“I had hoped,” writes her bereaved husband, “that she would be my example and consolation. She loved the cause of Christ. She loved the Indians. She was willing to sacrifice her all for their salvation. She had previously sacrificed her all to Jesus; and, when He came and called for her, she was ready to relinquish that hope [of benefiting them,] for which alone she manifested any desire to live.”

“I have often wished,” said another friend some time before her departure, “that, if I had not been doomed to exist an orphan, and never to experience the affection of a brother’s or a sister’s heart—if Providence had given me a sister, she might be like MARTHA EGER-TON. Though years have passed over my head since I have seen her, still the memory of her *mild* and *retiring* character has ever been fresh in my heart.

MARTHA had never failed to adorn that profession, concerning

pensities; and the more you are taught by the Spirit of God's grace, the more you will see that your heart is the seat of all that pride which was the first source of transgression; and that this is so entwined throughout every crevice of it, that not one thought nor expression can be registered in heaven as pure; and that, while it is so concealed as not to alarm, it may be ready to spring into action with every surrounding object.

"I have not lately been enough acquainted with your private character to know what are your peculiar temptations; but I would wish you to be particularly guarded against *throwing off restraint*. Mr. E. last Sabbath,—if you attended to it,—saved me the trouble of warning

which her mother had given her such excellent hints in the preceding letter. She was, in an eminent degree, *conscientious, modest, humble, prayerful, patient, submissive, persevering in every good work*. Indeed, possessed of her mother's moral and intellectual endowments, with superior advantages for improving them, and an unwavering desire of consecrating all her attainments to her Redeemer, what might not have been expected from her longer stay on earth?—But He who doeth "all things well," had otherwise determined.

And, while He has apparently brought her thus to a distant land to find an early grave;—if He has also thus unexpectedly answered the prayer of her dying mother "*that she might be preserved from the snares of a wicked world*;" and has made her death like "life from the dead" to her younger brother, that "other child," so often ejaculated in the preceding narrative; and spoken in tender faithfulness to those who loved her, and in the still voice of conviction to the heart of youth, of beauty, of loveliness, of piety, of the bride in her chamber with her high hopes of usefulness and happiness saying—"This is not your rest—prepare for that which remaineth for the people of God;—who, then, must not exclaim, in view of this trying dispensation, "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"

you against throwing off the restraints of religious education. It seemed to me that every young person who heard him, would readily acknowledge that, to follow such instructions as are given by the truly pious, according with what Solomon gave his son, would be too *safe* a way to neglect, too *honorable* a way to reject, and too *comfortable* a way not to follow. I believe the surest way to please our fellow creatures is to take the Bible for our guide. It enjoins upon us to love our neighbor as -ourselves. This principle being in exercise will save us from all bigotry, ill-will, distrust, envy, and the like disturbers of social happiness.

“*Chastity* is abundantly enjoined in Scripture, even to the extent of every thought and expression of countenance. This certainly can never fail to please even the ungodly. Though they may be willing to see this law of God violated to bring reproach upon his cause, yet in itself it is lovely. Do not mistake my meaning with regard to the motive of pleasing. I consider it not only a vain thing, but highly displeasing in the sight of God, to wear the garb of any virtue, wherein love to God, and a prevailing desire to do his will and be blest in our en-

deavors for his sake,—are out of his sight. God, in his wisdom, will expose all our deceptions; and by laying bare a base motive, may turn it to our greatest confusion. One word more upon chastity. I believe the many pert, unmeaning, uninteresting expressions which are so apt to escape the lips of our sex, originate, strictly speaking, in an unchaste spirit. That love of display, so easily detected and as surely despised, would not make so many destructive inroads within our weak minds, were it not for a tincture of unchastity. I would ever hold up to your view, obedience to God as the strongest motive to chastity. Could your dear father now speak to you on the subject, he would tell you that the other sex are *keen-eyed and severe towards ours*;—firm to protect the chaste till the last breath; but perfectly willing to abandon, at once, those of a contrary character.

“I should like to fill this page to Albert, if I had time. I exceedingly fear, my son, lest you forget your dependence, during this may-be short season of prosperity; and claim the mercies lent you, no doubt upon trial, *as your own*; and thus begin to wear an air of self-consequence. *There is no class of people who need*

more humility, and more self-government, than students,—none who are watched with a more jealous eye—none whose responsibilities to the Author of unmerited mercy, are greater. Oh, be sober ; be vigilant ! I dare not flatter you with regard to any future prospect, there is such a weight of responsibility rests upon you. Do not forsake the throne of grace, nor ever feel whole in yourselves.—My dear children, adieu.

“E. EGERTON.”

To her son, written near the close of his first school.

“ Albert,—As your return is soon expected, I must give you a word of caution—that you come not assuming the airs of a schoolmaster, but of a docile dependent scholar. I want you to be more than ever attentive to the interests of this family. As you have been for a season destitute of care of this kind, you will need to put forth stronger exertions, and feel the weight of duty and obligations, in order to shake off all sloth and self-indulgence. I think likely Mr. N. will not appear to you just as he did before his sickness. Perhaps he will manifest more impatience and less indulgence towards you. But mind what I say—if he should, instead of letting

it irritate, or create in you a disposition to treat him with coldness, exercise yourself to more particular acts of kindness and attention. Always explain every thing fairly, and be ready to confess your faults. Be sure to treat Mrs. N. also with attention. Do not let little things discourage you. I want you to have such a motive in pursuing study, as not to indulge a trifling, indolent spirit at all, nor be disconcerted at trifles. Do not be afraid of doing too much. I had rather have you feel that you do too little. I wish especially to have you feel so dependent upon the grace of God, as to let nothing deter you from stated seasons of prayer.

“YOUR MOTHER.”

To her daughter, written probably in 1825.

“*M*——, You must conduct yourself wisely in your present circumstances. No one can be capable of true friendship who will desert a friend when the public voice is against him. O if you knew the wickedness that lurks in the breasts of mankind, you would learn to prize worth wherever it *does* exist, as a rare article on earth. I know you have had some

very wicked companions—I know you have had some very wicked neighbors. And you, and A—— have both become contaminated thereby to such a degree, that you will both have bitter repentance hereafter. I copy a little scrap which lately struck me forcibly while it was read in school. ‘Among all human duties, none has a stronger claim on our attention than filial affection. Yet how often has the parent the misery of finding pertness substituted in the place of humility, arrogance in that of dependence, and *indifference in that of duty.*’ I have never thought you chargeable with these things towards me, yet there may be others who have equal claims to your fidelity, who *may* discover these things, or some of them, in both of you; and it may greatly affect their conduct towards you. There is no safety nor honesty towards one’s self, in a disaffected mind.

“I am not so ignorant of human nature, as not to know that duty under some circumstances is very difficult; yet it is none the less binding. Do both be faithful during Mr. N.’s absence. O that you had the law of gratitude and faithfulness written upon your hearts—towards God and man. A——, I wish you would find time

to read something that will give you a different train of thought. Next week, Saturday, I hope to ride up and see you.

“In the tenderest bonds of affection,
“YOUR MOTHER.”

The following note, to the same, is in some respects characteristic of Mrs. E., especially in the readiness manifested to *undo* what she became convinced, by reflecting on divine truth, had been *done wrong*.

“*Monday evening, —, 1826.*

“A FOOL UTTERETH ALL HIS MIND ; BUT A WISE MAN KEEPETH IT IN TILL AFTERWARDS.”
Prov. xxix. 11.

“*My dear,*—You see how I am reproved for expressing myself so freely to you Saturday evening. I have felt that, if profaning the Sabbath with unhallowed thoughts should be laid to your charge, I am guilty of being the cause of it, by reason of your disappointment on account of your choice not meeting my approbation. Thus, instead of exciting in your breast gratitude for the gift, and pleasantness for the favor, I have foolishly buried it all at

once in *that great red stripe*, [alluding to the figure of a dress,] which I presume would offend none but myself. M—, you may be assured that, upon reflection, it does not weigh the heft of a straw in my mind what sort of a gown you have, if any. Assure Mrs. N. of this—that I shall not hereafter exercise one anxious thought on the subject. *Dress* has become of so much importance in this town, that even those who, in principle, wish to discard its predominance, are in danger of being insensibly drawn into the vortex of fashion,—forgetting the exhortation in the first Epis. to Tim., 2d Chap. Ask Mrs. N. to forgive all my imprudencies. Take the word of God for your guide. May it administer instruction, as well as reproof.

“Your affectionate mother,
“EMILY EGERTON.”

To her son, soon after he entered College.

“*Tuesday eve., April 24th, 1827.*

“*Albert, my dear,*—Nothing can interest me more than a few moments converse with you. I love to bring you near in imagination, as you are ever near my heart.

“I was much gratified with the account you

gave of your situation. It has left an impression upon my mind that you are profitably as well as pleasantly situated. I love to feel a consciousness that you are happy ; that you enjoy every thing which a kind Parent has placed within the sphere of your enjoyment. But I want it should be without anything visionary or transient. I want your enjoyment should be rational, durable as eternity itself ; that when all the glittering meteors of life shall cease to charm, and shall have passed away, your grasp upon that which the winds and the waves of adversity cannot shake or demolish, may never be loosened. O this is a great work—'tis God's own work—the implantation of a right principle in the heart of man.

“It now remains to be proved whether you have so laid hold on Christ as to enable you to make those sacrifices which his holiness can accept. It is, and ever will be, a great satisfaction to me to believe that your intimate associates are of that stamp, that may assist you in preserving a right spirit. We must have a savor of that spirit which our Saviour possessed, to be always aiming at the greatest good, ‘having respect to the recompense of reward ;’—

believing, not speculatively, but practically, that all our motives of action as well as the actions themselves, will meet us in another world, before a heart-searching Judge. I do not expect to give you any new instruction, but only, in the words of St. Paul, ‘as a beloved son, I warn you.’

“* * * No one can more ardently pray for your prosperity than

“Your mother,

“E. EGERTON.”

With regard to Mrs. Egerton’s INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES, it would be readily inferred, from the exhibitions of her character and writings already made, that she was naturally possessed of sufficiently strong powers of mind,—rendered still more so by a rather contemplative habit; and especially by dwelling on the grand subjects of Christianity. She habitually wrote and read much, for one in her situation;—though in her verbal communications, however far from an unsocial turn,—she appeared usually to agree practically with the sentiment of Cowper, that

“*Talking* is not always to *converse*.”

She was possessed of an active and inventive imagination, which, united with her delicacy of

feeling, laid the foundation for a poetical turn. From a number of her effusions of this sort, I shall select a single specimen, with which, after a few verbal corrections, I shall close the memoir. It was occasioned by hearing the music of a bass-viol. It was the same instrument on which the husband of her youth, in years long gone by, had been accustomed to cheer the passing moments with her he loved.

Addressed to Mrs. M. M. N.

“ Marcia asks, with the care of a friend—
‘ Does the voice of that viol cause pain,—
Awaken sensations you dread
To have ever awakened again ?

Or has time, ever ready to heal,
Poured his balm on the wound once so deep,
And the clamor of life’s busy scenes
Lull’d those softer emotions to sleep ?’

M., these sounds that once ravished my ear,
Softly stealing the moments away,
Call me back still to scenes once so dear ;—
Chasten’d messengers ! kind is their sway.

Rich instruction they now can impart ;
For time has not paralyzed thought.
Soft sensations still twine ’round my heart
With eternal realities fraught.

Look at yonder neat web, wove with care,—
Little artist, does pride swell thy breast ?
— Fit emblem of life’s mad career,
Till the ROD solemn truth has impress’d.

If no changes were felt here below,
And this blight world were viewed as our home,
Passion's wind a strange tempest would blow ;
Reason's helm a sad, sad course would roam.

A lone pensioner, here for a day,
Often clouded with life's sickly gleam,
I love now to look far away,
Where sunshine forever shall beam.——

——When the friend who reclin'd on my breast,
Gave a parting look, death stood aghast.
Time is short ! with such force was impress'd,
Though unheeded at times, still it lasts.

Touch the strings which those cold hands have tuned
'*TIME IS SHORT !*' through my mind vibrates
still ;—

And, across the dark ocean of years,
Steals a glimpse through eternity's veil.

——Eternity ! Yes it is near.
Then let us, dear Marcia, be wise,
And prepare, while we tune our harps here,
For the 'chorus that gladdens the skies.'”

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: May 2005

PreservationTechnologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 166 998 9

